Harvey Kurtzman's™

JUNGLE BOOK



INTRODUCTION BY **GILBERT SHELTON** ■ ESSAY BY **DENIS KITCHEN**

AND A CONVERSATION BETWEEN **PETER POPLASKI** AND **R. CRUMB**

ESSENTIAL KURTZMAN VOLUME ONE

Harvey Kurtzman's

JUNGLE BOOK

(or)

UP FROM THE APES!

(and right back down)

In Which Are Described
In Words And Pictures
Businessmen, Private Eyes, Cowboys,
And Other Heros

ALL EXHIBITING

[THE PROGRESS OF MAN]

From the Darkness of the Cave

INTO THE LIGHT OF CIVILIZATION

by means of Television

WIDE SCREEN MOVIES

THE STONE AXE

and other useful arts

Harvey Kurtzman's™

JUNGLE BOOK

KITCHEN SINK BOOKS
AN IMPRINT OF DARK HORSE COMICS
MILWAUKIE, OREGON ■ AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS

THERE WEREN'T MANY RULES
OR RESTRICTIONS . . .

JUNGLE BOOK IS ONE OF THE
FEW THINGS THAT HAS BOTH
MY STORIES *AND* ART . . .

EVERYTHING ABOUT IT IS *MINE.*

– Harvey Kurtzman



Harvey Kurtzman's™

JUNGLE BOOK

ESSENTIAL KURTZMAN VOLUME ONE

WRITTEN & ILLUSTRATED BY

HARVEY KURTZMAN

INTRODUCTION BY **GILBERT SHELTON**

ESSAY BY **DENIS KITCHEN**

1986 INTRODUCTION BY **ART SPIEGELMAN**

EPILOGUE BY **PETER POPLASKI** AND **R. CRUMB**

COLLECTION EDITED & DESIGNED BY **JOHN LIND**

PUBLISHED BY **MIKE RICHARDSON**

KITCHEN SINK BOOKS

AN IMPRINT OF ***DARK HORSE COMICS***

MILWAUKIE, OREGON ■ AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS



respectfully dedicated to...



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PREVIOUS PAGE AND OPPOSITE: Harvey Kurtzman's classic self-portrait and the more unusual "mug shot" side view.



Kurtzman stimulating his creative writing abilities and showing his refined literary side as evidenced by a bubble pipe, circa 1960.

INTRODUCTION

BY GILBERT SHELTON

FOR ME, *HARVEY KURTZMAN'S JUNGLE BOOK* was one of the most influential comic books of the 1950s. I was aware of the works of Kurtzman before, notably *MAD* (although I thought his name was "H. Kurtz" since he signed that way, adding a stick figure sketch of a man), but I didn't realize that he *was* the genius behind *MAD*, writing and drawing the roughs for all the stories. When I first saw *MAD* in 1952, I was blown away. Kids would gather at recess to read it, dozens of us at a time. I wanted to turn the pages quickly, in order to follow the story, but most of the others wanted to see all the superfluous details by Will Elder.

Jungle Book appeared, which was written and illustrated by Kurtzman himself, and I realized the genius that he was. Alongside Jules Feiffer's *Sick Sick Sick*, *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book* made me want to be a cartoonist. I tried to imitate his drawing style which was very polished, although at the time it appeared to me to be rather spontaneous. Kurtzman spent more time on the drawings than I realized, and refined them to make them look like quick sketches.

I was always curious if the "Decadence Degenerated" story came from impressions during his military training in my father's hometown of Paris, Texas, which Kurtzman later explained was indeed the case. Paris was more of a city than Rottenville (with a population of 20,000 and an additional 40,000 stationed at Camp Maxey), but I can't help but wonder about the reception Kurtzman received in Texas—given that he was a Jew with a New York accent.

When I finally met Kurtzman in New York in 1961, he was very helpful and supportive. He had already reprinted some of my cartoons from *The Texas Ranger*, the student magazine at the University of Texas, and had encouraged me to create new Wonder Wart-Hog stories for *Help!*, (but he made me edit the content of them for publication somewhat). After *Help!*, Kurtzman worked on "Little Annie Fanny" for *Playboy*—not his best work. Hugh Hefner interfered with Kurtzman's sense of humor, insisting on a greater emphasis on sexual jokes (which happened to me too when I did comics for *Playboy*).

In the end, though, I still feel that Kurtzman is the greatest of all the comic book humorists.

—GILBERT SHELTON

PARIS, FRANCE
JUNE 2014

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE!

BY DENIS KITCHEN

IN EARLY 1959, AS HARVEY KURTZMAN threw himself into *Jungle Book*, he was in a desperate professional situation. Just over two years earlier he had seemed on top of the world. In 1956, *MAD*—his brainchild—was rapidly becoming an American cultural (or anti-cultural) institution, first as a rule-breaking color comic book and then as a black-and-white magazine, both versions having a quick and profound impact. While comic book circulations were generally in steady decline and the medium was being widely reviled by the media, parent groups, and politicians for its alleged delinquent effect on young readers, *MAD*'s sales were surging, and both the publication and Kurtzman were getting great press. *MAD*'s success, in large part, was because it wasn't just kid stuff or mindless genre filler like the vast majority of comics of the time; *MAD*'s humor was intelligent, and its loyal enthusiasts included college students, adults, and even intellectuals.

Among *MAD*'s growing and ardent fans was the creator of another magazine, one that was founded very shortly after *MAD*. His publication was also defying genre stereotype, surging in sales and being read by many intellectuals. Hugh Hefner in Chicago reached out to Harvey Kurtzman in New York to express his admiration. Kurtzman was likewise impressed with Hefner's *Playboy*, the first men's magazine to surround photos of unclothed women with a top-notch array of fiction, gag cartoons, illustrations, and art. From another publishing outpost that commanded no respect, Hefner dared to attempt class and sophistication. Kurtzman could relate fully.

Harvey Kurtzman and Hugh Hefner in other ways professionally paralleled each other: Each singularly conceived their publication; each was immersed creatively and willing to work tirelessly around the clock; both men were self-confident and autocratic editors, demanding nothing short of the best work from the top talents they attracted; and both men attained deep cult followings. But there was one significant difference among the otherwise startling similarities: Hefner was the creator and publisher of *Playboy*, its primary owner, and Kurtzman was a hired hand with no certain piece of his creation.

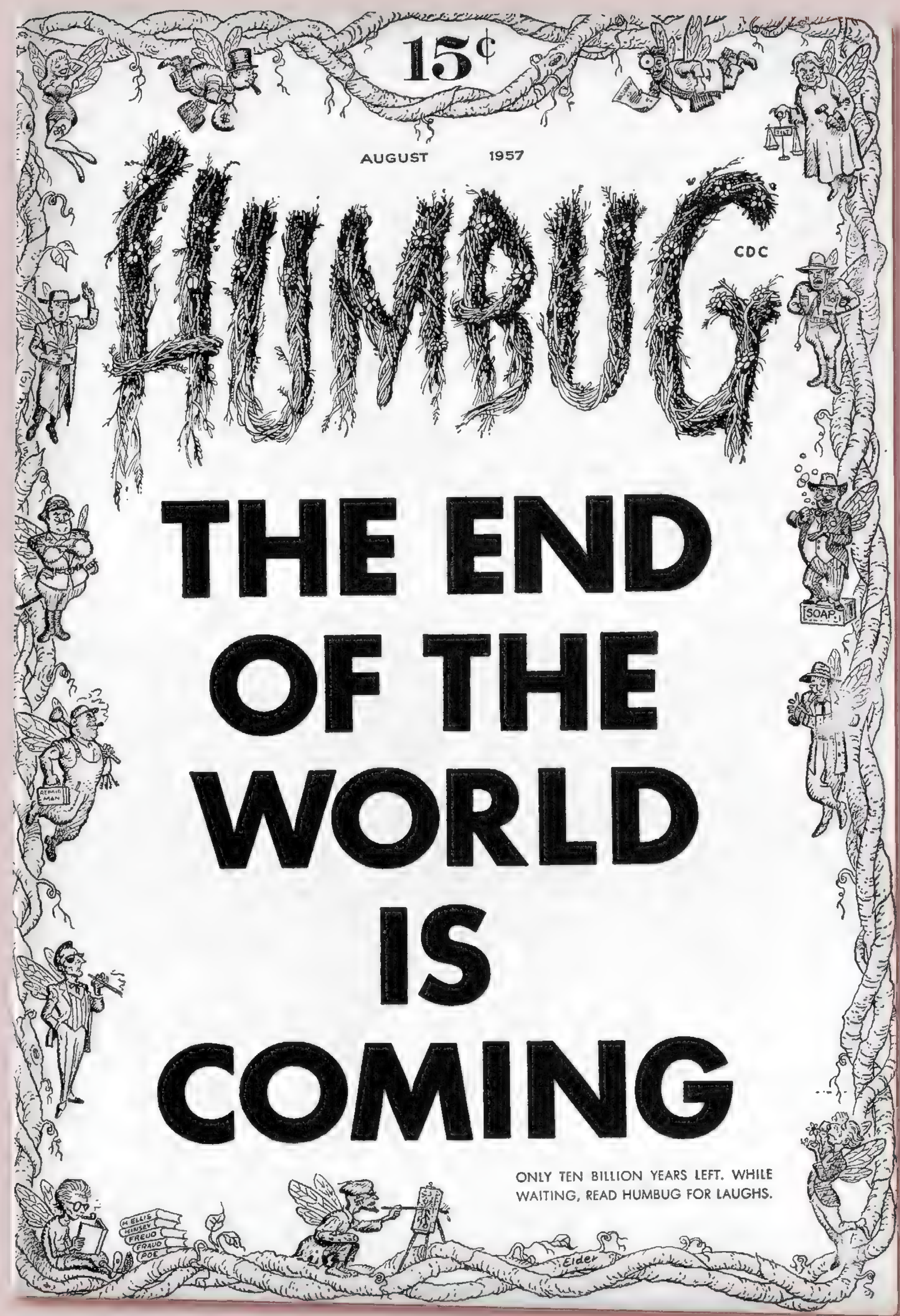
OPPOSITE: Harvey Kurtzman senses something atypical about his situation in this humorous studio portrait done during a *Help!* magazine cover shoot in 1963.

MAD's publisher and owner (with his mother Jessie) was William M. Gaines. Gaines was honest and reliable, unlike many comic publishers, but he was also tight-fisted, eccentric, patriarchal, and risk-averse. When Gaines's pioneering EC comic book empire was on the verge of collapse in the mid-1950s because of distribution woes and intense pressure from the industry's self-imposed Comics Code Authority, Gaines was ready to call it quits. It was Kurtzman who urged that Gaines focus on *MAD* alone and switch it from comic book format to magazine, and it was Kurtzman who personally convinced Jessie Gaines to make the financial investment. The format change freed *MAD* from the censorial reach of the Comics Code Authority and simultaneously freed the publication from the ghetto of comic book racks. Kurtzman, though not generally recognized as an astute businessman, was responsible for the bold move, one that significantly boosted both *MAD*'s circulation and its per-issue revenue (the 10¢ comic book was now a 25¢ publication). Kurtzman saved the publishing company and Gaines was very grateful.

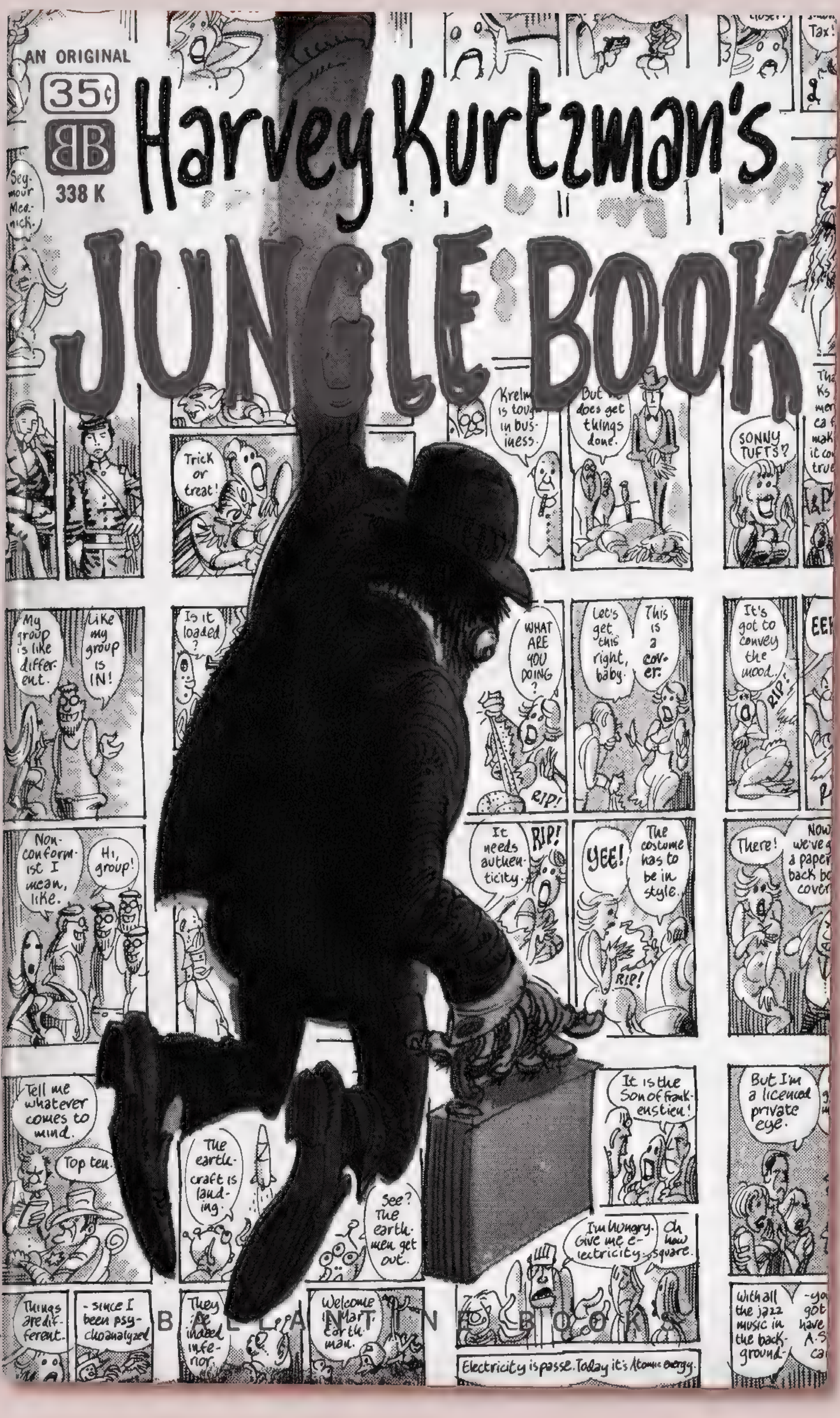
The format change pleased Kurtzman, but the black-and-white format on cheap paper still left him less than fully satisfied. His dream had been to produce a "slick" magazine: full color on the slicker-surface enamel stock typical of "respectable" magazines, something Gaines was unwilling to do. Kurtzman expressed that frustration to his new friend Hugh Hefner, who was happy to fan the flames of discontent. Hefner told Kurtzman he'd happily publish a humor magazine in the format Kurtzman desired, and with a much higher editorial budget to boot. Kurtzman, thus emboldened, confronted Gaines via an intermediary, and demanded 51% equity in *MAD* or he would leave. Gaines quickly counter-offered with 10% equity (he was willing to go as high as 49% according to cartoonist Al Jaffee) to retain Kurtzman, whom he saw at the time as indispensable to *MAD*'s survival. But Kurtzman stubbornly refused to budge and Gaines, while willing to compromise with him, was understandably not willing give up control of the family business, and the men parted acrimoniously, with the core of *MAD*'s top artists loyally following Kurtzman.

Trump, Kurtzman's new humor magazine for Hefner, was every bit as slick as Kurtzman desired, and he packed it with illustrious writers and cartoonists, but the dream was short-lived: *Trump* came to an abrupt halt in 1957 after just two issues, for various reasons, mostly financial. Stunned by the sudden and unexpected turn of events, ringleader Kurtzman and his closest collaborators, Will Elder, Arnold Roth, Al Jaffee, and Jack Davis, impulsively, and in hindsight, infused with misplaced idealism, decided to publish on their own. Pooling their collective savings, all but Davis became partners in *Humbug*, a decidedly un-slick satire publication the size of a comic book. But with only two colors and text pieces mingled with comics, it was neither fish nor fowl. Worse, it retailed for 15¢, a nickel more than the full-color comics alongside it on racks. Add to that, *Humbug*'s printer and distributor was Charlton, the weakest and arguably least honest of the remaining players in the faltering comic book business. This time not even a late format switch to magazine could turn the course and in early 1958 *Humbug* collapsed. With it, the savings and financial security of Kurtzman and his cohorts were lost.

Kurtzman's world, in short course, collapsed with *Humbug*. He had a wife, a mortgage, and three young children (one with profound autism) and no immediate prospects for revenue. Even without two flopped periodicals still in his rearview mirror, the market for



Cover to *Humbug* #1 with an almost prophetic cover in relation to Kurtzman's financial and personal life in the months leading up to *Jungle Book*.



The 1959 Ballantine Books edition of *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book* was printed on a cheap pulp paper and at the reduced "digest" size of 4.25 x 7 inches.

satirists was bleak. In April 1958 Kurtzman was collecting unemployment compensation and eagerly seeking work. He took meetings and sent proposals to every major magazine, to friends in the TV business (including talk show hosts Steve Allen and Dave Garroway), to book publishers, to advertising agencies, and even Hanna-Barbera Animation, but with few encouraging results. He couldn't go back to *MAD*—that bridge was burned. He eventually connected with Ian Ballantine, the pioneering paperback publisher whose Ballantine Books originally licensed the rights to condense the early *MAD* comic books into inexpensive black-and-white "pocket books." Five such editions had been packaged by Kurtzman: *The MAD Reader*, *MAD Strikes Back*, *Inside MAD*, *Utterly MAD*, and *The Brothers MAD*, selling millions of copies and being continually reprinted. In 1955 alone *The MAD Reader* was reprinted five times, each with six-figure print runs. But in 1958, starting with the sixth paperback edition, Gaines switched licensees, granting all rights to future collections to a Ballantine rival, Signet Books.

Ballantine needed to replace the void left by Gaines's shift in loyalty, so he reached out to Kurtzman. When he visited Ballantine in late 1958 the publisher's face was likely the first truly welcoming one Kurtzman had seen in a while. But Ballantine wasn't the only one in his organization who respected and liked Kurtzman. His editor Bernard Shir-Cliff was tight with Kurtzman. In fact it was a turn-of-the-century postcard on Shir-Cliff's bulletin board where Kurtzman first saw the idiot boy that evolved into Alfred E. Neuman, *MAD*'s famous trademark. Ballantine recognized Kurtzman as the genius behind *MAD* and, resenting the loss of future *MAD*-related revenues, saw a chance to replace those losses with Kurtzman.

Prior to Kurtzman's bitter parting with Gaines, he initially received a slice of Gaines's healthy royalties from Ballantine, but after their falling out the royalty spigot was turned off, with even Kurtzman's name spitefully removed from *MAD* reprints. Ballantine, likewise no current friend of Gaines, was acutely aware that Kurtzman's post-*MAD*, post-*Trump* publication *Humbug* had failed: he in fact published the *Humbug Digest* paperback, and his $2,500 advance for those rights in mid-1957 was a crucial lifeline to the struggling *Humbug* partners. He even threw a party when the paperback launched and placed paid advertising in *Humbug*. A sequel collection, *Humbug the Second*, was contracted for in December 1957 and a partial advance was paid before *Humbug* folded. Ballantine, knowing that *Humbug* was handicapped by its connection to Charlton, didn't hold its failure against Kurtzman.

The idea Kurtzman suggested was a radical one: a pocket book with all-new comics content. This had never been done before. Pushing the idea a bit further, Kurtzman didn't want to create the new paperback with longtime collaborators Will Elder or Jack Davis, whose styles were attractive, recognizable, and commercial—he would write and draw the book himself. Kurtzman's art was and is widely admired by artists and fan cognoscenti, but a solo book by Kurtzman was unprecedented and thus an additional risk. This decision was, in part, the personal pride of a comics auteur, but given his lean circumstances, it also meant he didn't have to share an advance and royalties. A contract was entered into in January 1959, with options for Ballantine to follow with similar books. If Ballantine had reservations about the project, it was reflected in the $1,500 advance, forty percent less than the *Humbug Digest* received a year and a half earlier. Kurtzman's negotiating leverage was limited and the advance was payable in twelve weekly payments of $125 so, for three months at least, he could expect regular checks.

The contract was for *Harvey Kurtzman's Pleasure Package*. Kurtzman created a color cover incorporating that title, but for reasons unknown, the "Pleasure Package" title and cover art were soon scrapped and replaced with *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*. For both the creator and the publisher the ultimate payoff could be big: even sales a significant fraction of a *MAD* paperback would make both men happy. Ballantine hoped the name value of *MAD*'s creator would guarantee strong sales, and Kurtzman, trying to regain financial stability, was counting on the company that sold vast quantities of *MAD* paperbacks to sell reasonably vast quantities of *Jungle Book*, along with its sequels. Both men would be very disappointed.

Kurtzman's deadline required that he deliver a cover and 144 pages of content by May 1, 1959, a daunting pace, made even more daunting when he couldn't begin drawing till early February, after production kinks were supposedly resolved. The noble experiment was not helped by the technical limitations of paperback printing. Kurtzman, who enjoyed the highest printing quality Hugh Hefner could afford at *Trump*, was brought full and humbling circle at Ballantine. To save money Ballantine's printer converted Kurtzman's beautiful originals to Veloxes, a photographic technique converting his art to coarsely screened images. In Kurtzman's own words: "The package itself was rinky-dink. It was small and printed on bad paper and the printing itself was two cuts under the pulps. On top of that, I did the art on sheets of blue-lined paper. It was an experiment. The printer assured me that the lines wouldn't show up, but of course, they did. Still do. The gray wash reinforced the blue and so the thing is noticeable. It was a case of experimenting with a form before all the bugs were out."

Jungle Book comprises four distinct stories. The first and third satirize popular TV shows of the day: *Peter Gunn*, a hip detective show, and *Gunsmoke*, already an icon among the record-setting twenty-six Westerns dominating TV fare in 1959. The other two stories are not easily categorized in a popular culture context. The second story in *Jungle Book*, partially autobiographical, examines the "schlock" periodicals business, and the final story tackles "the D-Generate school of Southern Writing," not to mention prejudice and the objectification of women. He initially toyed with the idea of including a science fiction movie parody, but after creating two test pages dropped that notion.

The TV show *Peter Gunn*, the impetus for "Thelonius Violence," caught Kurtzman's eye for satire quickly: he spoofed the detective drama midway through its first year of an eventual three-season run. *Peter Gunn* is best remembered for its catchy Henry Mancini theme song. The sophisticated private eye Gunn, played by actor Craig Stevens, used a jazz club as his office, and cool jazz permeated and defined the series. And thus Thelonious Monk inspired the name of Gunn's cartoon counterpart and jazz itself became the connective tissue of this ambitious story. Conveying the sounds of jazz in the cartoon medium is no easy task, but Kurtzman was up to it. From the first page's VA VOODLE-DE BLAH-DA DAAAA DEE DODN-DEE RAAAN he interjects jazz trumpet "sounds": the size of letters implying volume and gradually diminishing letter sizes suggesting notes plaintively trailing off.

OPPOSITE: Kurtzman's contracted work for Ballantine was initially titled *Harvey Kurtzman's Pleasure Package*, as shown in this abandoned cover painting.

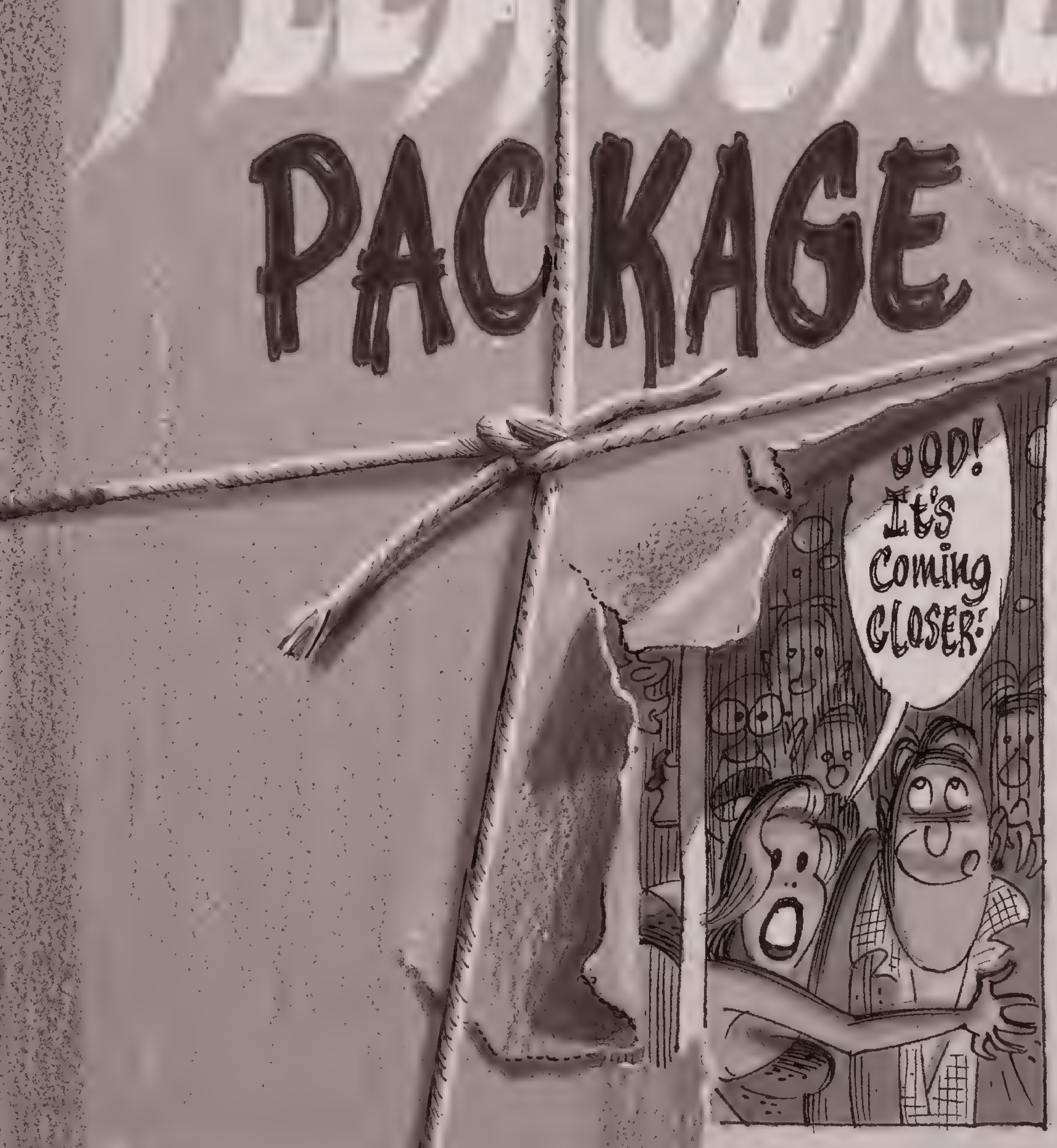
An Original

35¢

BB

330K

H. Kurtzman's PLEASURE PACKAGE



Readers in 1959—and those who have heard Mancini's "Peter Gunn Theme" in more recent incarnations such as *The Blues Brothers*—find themselves substituting the memorable tune for Kurtzman's near-abstract musical verbiage, and that involuntary internal sound track segues perfectly with the parody's visual rhythm. The story is drawn with exceptional vitality, particularly the two nightclub fight scenes. The first fight scene is choreographed masterfully: Violence actually cues the combo at the onset of the confrontation ("and one and two and three . . . "). As Violence is mercilessly pummeled by the big bespectacled lug, the graphic brutality is accompanied by the relentless "UNK! UNK! UNK!" solo of a gleeful bass player, until the coup de grace punch is punctuated by a trumpet's blaring "BLEEAAAP!" As Violence is finally propelled through the club, overturning tables and patrons, the staccato BLAHTS of the Mancini theme crescendo are especially evident.

In the second fight scene, the tables are turned on the big lug when Violence makes a crazy face, administers a series of Japanese judo chops, and then—as the solo bass and jazz soundtrack abruptly changes to rhythmic tom-tom drums—he administers his own devastating blow: the soft "Pok!" sound from a finger popping his lips. The scene is testimony to Kurtzman's genius with storytelling, timing, composition, and anatomical exaggeration. Kurtzman called these pages "favorites" of his.

Kurtzman's ink wash technique throughout *Jungle Book* allowed the artist to employ a full range of gray. But the shading subtleties, especially on the darker side, were largely lost in the original printing, due to the coarseness of reproduction and poor paper. Kurtzman's full intent can be appreciated in the original art, with prime examples in the fight scenes. As the fast action catches and quickly pulls readers' eyes from panel to panel, background detail is likely ignored. The detail is extraneous to the plot, but worth examining. The figures in the dark gray backgrounds of the fight panels are not static, and an ever-changing cast—including a king, hipsters, an old lady, beautiful women, a deep-sea diver, monsters, a chef, Johnny Reb, and even George Washington—watches the action bemusedly from the shadows.

The story is replete with secondary jokes and "eye pops," such as decapitated patrons, a two-headed woman, a Charlie Chan racial caricature, a reference to Ballantine's editor Shir-Cliff, the incongruous appearance of Alvin and the Chipmunks in a jazz club, and so forth. In the final two pages, where Violence is exposed as a blackmailer and extortionist, and he and his reformed partner do "honest" work, Kurtzman throws a satiric punch at another TV genre, one where fake fighting is highly rewarded: professional wrestling. Kurtzman reprised Violence's hipster lingo (and accompanying jazz scene) one year following *Jungle Book* in his retelling of the *Æsop* fable "The Grasshopper and the Ant" for *Esquire*.

"The Organization Man in the Grey Flannel Executive Suite" takes its title from three best-selling business books of the 1950s: *The Organization Man* (William H. Whyte), *The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit* (Sloan Wilson), and *The Executive Suite* (Cameron Hawley).

OPPOSITE: Actor Craig Stevens in character as private eye "Peter Gunn" who would serve as the basis for Kurtzman's "Thelonius Violence."

The story itself is significant on a number of levels, including its autobiographical elements. Goodman Beaver, the naïve new employee joining Schlock Publications, "full of intellect, ideals, and moral conviction, with a burning enthusiasm to create new things" is (early in the story) a stand-in for Harvey Kurtzman, who began his career freelancing for Martin Goodman. Goodman's sprawling publishing company included Timely/Marvel Comics, true crime and men's adventure magazines (including *Male* and *Stag*), and crossword puzzle collections. It is no coincidence that Beaver's first name not only literally reads "good man," but, as he becomes corrupted, is also the last name of the schlockmeister who provided much of Kurtzman's meager income during the 1940s.

Goodman Beaver is the only character in *Jungle Book* to live on—and what a fascinating road "he" would take. Kurtzman's next (and final) magazine, *Help!*, was a hodgepodge of fumetti, nostalgic cartoon reprints, gag cartoons, fiction, and, occasionally, new comics featuring a more-polished Goodman Beaver. The stories were still written and laid out by Kurtzman, but with finished art by Will Elder. The corrupted Goodman at the end of "Organization Man" was forgotten and he remained the eternal naïf, confronting the reality or hypocrisy behind cultural icons like Superman, Tarzan, TV's *Sea Hunt*, and (decades ahead of the trend) gun ownership. As *Help!* inevitably floundered, Kurtzman remained in regular touch with Hugh Hefner. *Playboy*'s founder loved the Goodman Beaver stories, especially the one where Hefner was literally portrayed as the devil, trading sin and immorality to America's youth (depicted by the *Archie* cast) for their souls. The two men decided to bring the Goodman premise to *Playboy*, as a lavish fully painted comics feature. The popular episodes satirized all manner of topics for a quarter century. Of course, in order to star in *Playboy*, Goodman had to change more than his name and would be recast as "Little Annie Fanny."

"Organization Man" provides a jaundiced, caustic, and darkly funny insight into the lowbrow publishing world that Kurtzman labored in and observed for two decades: tiny offices full of drunk, cynical, womanizing editors, incessantly fondled secretaries, heartless publishers obsessed with profit margins, over-the-hill shells, and insecure and suicidal employees, with hopes and dreams shattered, but always plenty of coffee and Danishes. After twenty years in the publishing meat grinder, Kurtzman's recent up-and-down career might have appeared on the ascendancy again: his notable success with *MAD* was followed by acrimony and a lost fortune in equity on exiting; the slick, prestigious, and high-budget *Trump* was followed by Hefner's short, quick rope; then the financial disaster of *Humbug*. The low advance and "two cuts under the pulps" production standards at Ballantine may have partially driven the cynicism of "Organization Man," but if it did, Kurtzman didn't cut corners with *Jungle Book*. He gave it his all, and many regard it as his best.

"Compulsion on the Range" was the first story Kurtzman created for *Jungle Book*, and he wasn't particularly happy with it. It's the weakest, certainly in terms of drawing chops.

OPPOSITE: Kurtzman's sample page for "Compulsion on the Range" (BOTTOM) shown under a production still from the *Gunsmoke* television show it parodies.

Listen, boy... you're askin' fo trouble. Now give me your guns. I got to see this town is peaceable like with no shootin or fightin...

You gone crazy, marshall? You wanna lose yore sponsers?

Ah'm makin' mah play -

BAR

BLAM BLAM

I tol' you you were askin' fo trouble...

- fo' shootin' a marshall.

You can get in plenty trouble -

Now you got it, boy.

The popular TV Western *Gunsmoke*, starring James Arness as Marshal Matt Dillon, was the ostensible basis for the story, but "adult Westerns" were at the core of this take-off. Freudian psychoanalysis, which Kurtzman had long studied, was a frequent theme of 1950s Hollywood westerns. Heroes, like Marshal Dollin in "Compulsion," and anti-heroes, more and more tended to psychoanalyze themselves and their motives: after decades of relatively simple shoot 'em ups, Westerns were getting complicated. Cowboys were becoming head cases.

Shortly before the opportunity to create *Jungle Book* arose, when Kurtzman was flailing about for work, he pitched *TV Guide*, one of America's highest circulation magazines and known for high freelance wages. In early August 1958 Kurtzman met with managing editor Merrill Panitt, a self-described "long-time admirer." Kurtzman followed up with a color rough spoofing the ultimate Western cliché called "Endings to End the Fast Draw." Panitt turned it down. Kurtzman didn't take the rejection well. "I had so much confidence that I could sell *TV Guide* a piece," he wrote, "and now, all confidence is blasted and dying . . . there on the floor, along with old crumpled *Humbug* returns." But eight months later he did sell a piece to *TV Guide*, and the fast-draw reject didn't completely disappear; it morphed into "Obsession."

"Decadence Degenerated" is arguably the strongest story in the quartet. "This story is my memory of Paris, Texas. It was my inspiration," Kurtzman said. "Back then [Paris] looked like Rottenville." The back cover text of the Ballantine edition, written by Kurtzman, calls the story "an unprovoked attacked on the D-Generate school of Southern Writing," typified at the time by playwright Tennessee Williams and author Erskine Caldwell, who had also been parodied a short time earlier in *Trump*.

Kurtzman, a Jew, saw firsthand how minorities were treated in Texas in the mid-1940s. He witnessed, with distaste, a black officer being openly disrespected by white enlisted men at Camp Maxey and, in small ways, he did his best to counter discrimination then and later. There are no African-American characters in "Decadence," but when the opening proclaims that this is a story about a lynch mob, a "very entertaining . . . lynch mob story," there could be no doubt in any 1950s reader's mind the color of people who were actually lynched in America in prior decades. In this story, Si Mednick is strung-up as a prototypical Southern sheriff of the era does nothing to stop the mob. Not only is the victim Jewish, he's the town intellectual (he reads books) and is repeatedly called "queer." Mednick is also innocent, at least of the crime he was lynched for, in Kurtzman's ironic knife twist.

The hicks who sit and spit in Rottenville's town square speak in hilarious drawls. Kurtzman always had an uncanny ear for dialogue and it's nowhere better than this story. Southern-style justice and the ambiguity of good and evil are the apparent focus of "Decadence," but another issue is addressed. Kurtzman's women in *Jungle Book*, particularly in "Thelonius Violence," have exaggerated hourglass bodies and more often than not are mere eye candy in the jazz club and poolside at the country club. The objectification of women was not a burning issue of American cultural politics in 1959, and Kurtzman had no problem depicting women as sex objects, whether overt or pointing out (in "Obsession") the incongruity of "purty Indian gals all lip-sticked and mascaraed." But in his two most personal stories he sympathetically observes the sexist treatment of females: the relentless harassment of the secretary Mike in "Organization Man," where he also pokes fun at the ultimate sex

object: the gigantic Whooboy centerfold. In "Decadence" the riveting two-page spread of Honey Lou being stripped naked in the minds of the town hicks, even as they make small talk with her, lays bare the inner workings of many if not most male brains. When Sam, Honey Lou's stout and unattractive sister, stands in front of the same crowd, the "gennulmen" simultaneously envision her naked too, even as they fear her. Kurtzman doesn't condemn, he observes. The scenes are funny but discomforting. Who else in comics at this time was so blatantly addressing sexism even before it had a name?

Ballantine printed 150,000 copies of *Jungle Book* in September 1959. That print quantity was described in an internal Ballantine memo as "a small run." The book, which retailed for 35¢ and earned a 4% royalty, would have had to sell about 107,000 copies to "earn out" Kurtzman's advance and produce additional revenue for him. But nearly five years after publication *Jungle Book* had only sold slightly over 78,000 copies, barely half the number printed, and a fraction of the millions each corresponding *MAD* paperback was selling. Ballantine was forced to eventually pulp his remaining *Jungle Book* print run with Kurtzman never seeing another penny from the publisher.

Kurtzman's experimental paperback was a commercial flop, but that certainly doesn't mean it was an aesthetic failure. Among those inspired by *Jungle Book* were numerous future underground cartoonists, Gilbert Shelton, Art Spiegelman, Spain Rodriguez, Joel Beck, Jay Lynch, Skip Williamson, and this essay writer. Many later got their break into professional publishing by contributing to Kurtzman's *Help!* R. Crumb, in his 1976 introduction to *Kurtzman Komix*, noted, "He is as good as any cartoonist in history . . . Some of his greatest stuff was done in a little Ballantine Book called *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*." When some began to call him the "father of underground comix," he deferred. "I'd rather be known as the father-in-law."

The Comics Journal's "Top 100 English-Language Comics of the Century" lists *Jungle Book* as #26 and Kurtzman tallies five total projects on the list; no one else has more than three. The late Fantagraphics editor/co-publisher Kim Thompson,



Kurtzman "feverishly" signing stacks of *Jungle Book* used for promotion with a subscription to *Help!*

called the book "one of the art form's most stunning successes, and one of the field's most heartbreaking failures," while asking the rhetorical question, "What would have happened had *Jungle Book* been a success?"

Nearly twenty years after *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book* appeared and quickly disappeared, Kurtzman's friend Will Eisner, another giant in comics history, created something very similar in format to *Jungle Book*. Like Kurtzman, Eisner produced a book of original graphic work comprising four stories, and, like *Jungle Book*, two of them coincidentally had strong autobiographical elements. Both works are now regarded as innovative and influential works of genius. There was one big difference. When Eisner's *A Contract with God* was published in 1978, it was not only commercially successful: it dramatically jump-started the genre revolution called graphic novels. The world was much more receptive to such a book by the late 1970s: there was a well-organized comics fandom, a profusion of fanzines, conventions, and comic book storefronts. Kurtzman, a younger man than Eisner, couldn't help but feel that he had been way ahead of his time.

For a few years following *Jungle Book*, Kurtzman produced a handful of glorious solo works, mostly for *Esquire* and *Pageant*, some in color, but all much shorter than his *Jungle Book* stories, before concluding that his own finished art was simply not commercially viable. This led to two and a half decades of writing stories and drawing layouts for Will Elder on "Little Annie Fanny" at *Playboy*, where the visually gorgeous work was hampered by obligatory sex formulas and heavy editing. But if Kurtzman's fans had it in their power most would certainly trade twenty-five years of lavish Annie Fannies for just a few more magnificent solo works akin to *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*.

—DENIS KITCHEN
AMHERST, MASSACHUSETTS
JULY 2014



"There are geniuses...and then there are geniuses."

INTRO
by art spiegelman

When the publisher called to invite me to write an introduction to Harvey Kurtzman's JUNGLE BOOK I felt proud. Even when I was told that I was invited to write this introduction because Robert Crumb, the publisher's first choice, was "burned out from having written too many introductions in the past few months," I was still proud—humbled, but proud.

I was glad of the chance to acknowledge the impact Harvey Kurtzman has had on my generation. I was glad of the chance to make readers aware of Harvey Kurtzman's key place in the development of comics as an art form. But, **mainly**, I was glad of the chance to get a furshlugginer free copy of a deluxe hard-cover item that would otherwise set me back twenny-five smackeroos, by George. Hoo Hah! I'm not <u>that</u> proud.

A Kurtzman formula: you say something true, but high-minded — preferably a **couple** of things true, but high-minded, to set up the rhythm. Then you deflate the whole lofty mess by saying something **really** true, but base and down-to-earth. You point out that the Emperor is *nekkid*, that mortals are driven by greed and lust. And preferably, you do it with a vaguely self-deprecatory Yiddish cadence so that nobody gets too mad at you for telling your truths.

...and, if you're Harvey Kurtzman, you do it with impeccable timing and a tight sense of structure reminiscent of Keaton that leaves the reader with not just a laugh, but Insight. There.

That should be enough to score me a free copy. But, I'll confess—just don't tell the publisher: This is one book I'd even **pay** for, if it came to that, even though I'm one of the lucky few owners of a copy of the original 1959 paperback. Like most of the other copies I've seen, mine is more like a murkily printed newsprint portfolio. Ballantine Books' cheap glue binding is just a memory. I keep all the loose yellowed pages in a plastic bag. I've handled these pages with all the care due a sacred text, but my copy just won't bear up under many more re-readings.

Tattered and decomposing, my JUNGLE BOOK sits on a shelf next to the MAD paperback anthologies that were my first introduction to Kurtzmania. Those successful anthologies indirectly brought the JUNGLE BOOK into being. When the MAD books switched from Ballantine to Signet, the original publisher was amenable to trying a new cartoon book by MAD's creator. Kurtzman was able to design material to fit the tall vertical format of a mass market paperback. Those MAD reprints had always been uncomfortable, compromised affairs that involved cutting and repasting the original comic book pages to fit sideways on a page, thereby damaging those precious rhythms that Kurtzman worked so hard on.

MAD's satires were often directed at the "kid culture" of Howdy Doody, Mickey Mouse, Captain Video and the like. The JUNGLE BOOK very specifically took on middle-brow adult entertainment as its target. It was an important step toward making comics themselves Adult Entertainment. Even though some of the targets of the satires (PETER GUNN, GUNSMOKE) have become no more than footnotes in the history of American popular culture, the strips stand up rather well.

The drawing alone would make this book worth reprinting. Nowhere else is there such a large body of Kurtzman's own drawing. All too often his drawings have functioned as guides for his collaborators. Even with the most inspired of these, the lunatic Will Elder, the

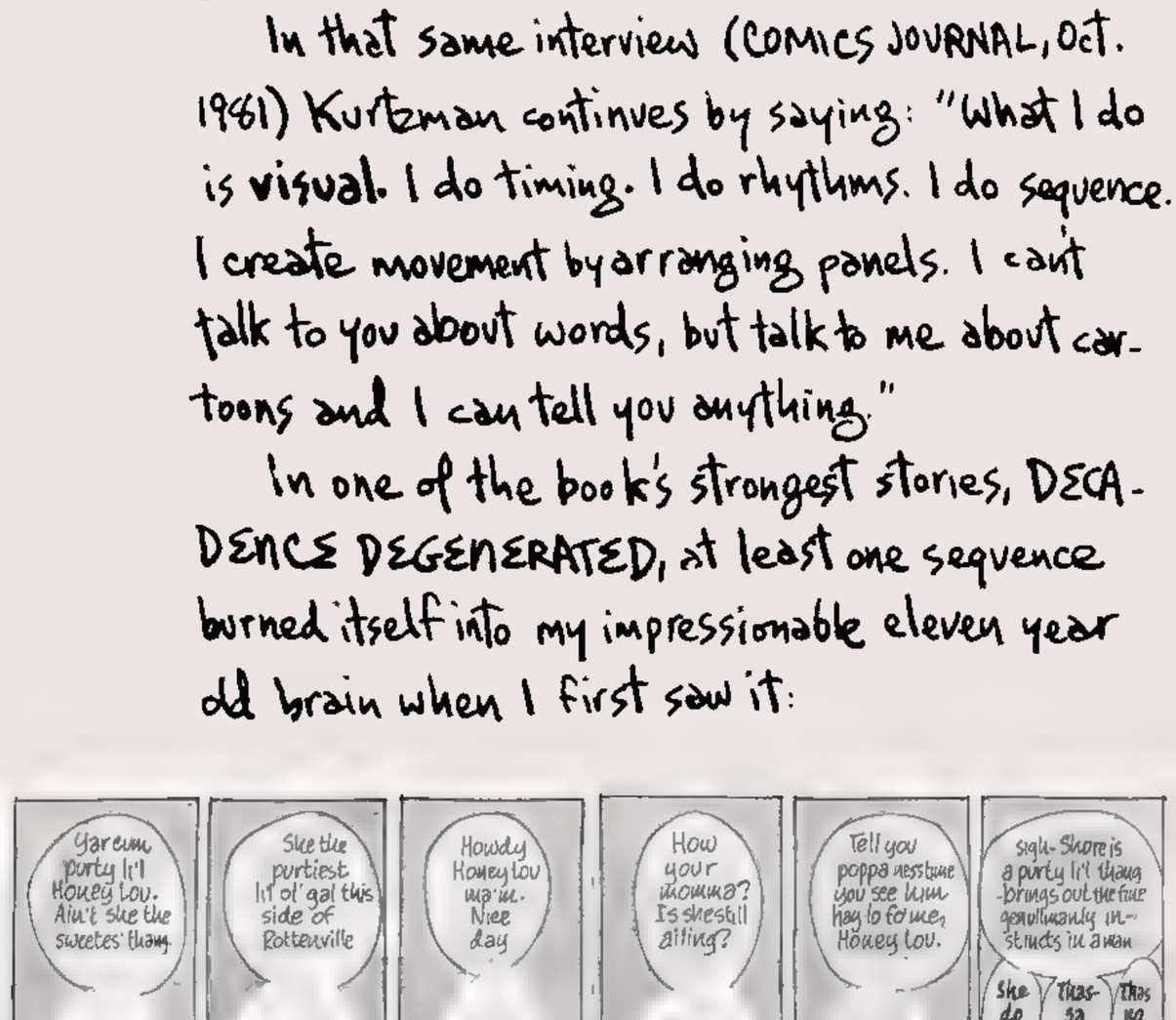
OPPOSITE: Harvey Kurtzman and Denis Kitchen at Berkeley Comic Con, 1973.

densely-packed eyeball kicks are gotten at the expense of the verve and apparent immediacy of Kurtzman's own drawings. The sketchy, lumpy "doodles" of the JUNGLE BOOK are a departure from the brash and jazzy brush drawings in his early HEY LOOK! comic book filler pages, but are equally energetic and expressive. He always makes his drawings look so effortless, so much like his own handwriting. In fact, in this book its **all** handwriting - he eschews type altogether. Even the copyright page is hand lettered.

In interviews Kurtzman has tended to be overly modest about his own drawing abilities, and downright derogatory of his abilities as a writer: "Writing is an abstract exercise that some people are geniuses at, but I'm **terrible** at. I don't work well with that particular talent of manipulating words." The writing in this book proves him wrong. Each of the four stories shows a keen ear for language: parodies of hipster Talk, ad agency jargon, Western dialect, Good Ol' Boy drawl.

In that same interview (COMICS JOURNAL, Oct. 1961) Kurtzman continues by saying: "What I do is **visual**. I do timing. I do rhythms. I do sequence. I create movement by arranging panels. I can't talk to you about words, but talk to me about cartoons and I can tell you anything."

In one of the book's strongest stories, DECADENCE DEGENERATED, at least one sequence burned itself into my impressionable eleven year old brain when I first saw it:


Ya reum purty li'l Honey Lou. Ain't she the sweetes' thang
She the purtiest lil' ol' gal this side of Rottenville
Howdy Honey Lou wa'm. Nice day
How your momma? Is she still ailing?
Tell you poppa next time you see him hay lo for me, Honey Lou.
Sigh - Shore is a purty li'l thang - brings out the true gen'lmanly instincts in a man
She do!
Thas-sa trook.
Thas no lie!
SIERRA BEER
BAR
BAR
BAR
BAR
BAR
BAR

... No. Not just for the - HOO HAH! - obvious reasons, though this was Hot Stuff in 1959, but because something was happening here with the pictures, with the words, and with the pictures-as-words that could happen in no other medium. Kurtzman's breakdowns are always so well thought out and efficient, an aspiring comics artist can find no better textbook on the visual grammar of storytelling.

THE ORGANIZATION MAN IN THE GREY FLANNEL EXECUTIVE SUITE is the story that always struck the deepest nerve in me. Kurtzman's own experiences in publishing obviously provided the background, the impetus and the venom for this story about the loss of Innocence and ideals when a starry-eyed idealist is confronted with the morality of Capitalism. Most American comics, certainly those of the Super-Heroic persuasion, deal with the fantasies of power. THE ORGANIZATION MAN deals with the **realities** of power and its corrosive effects.

To appreciate it fully, it might help to know a little about Kurtzman's own publishing experiences: In 1954 he created MAD, one of America's most significant cultural artifacts. (His MAD was a far stranger, deeper, funnier, more significant artifact than the stodgy money-machine that now bears the name.) After transforming MAD from a brilliant, idiosyncratic comic book into an idiosyncratic, brilliant magazine, he split from the publisher, William Gaines, in a dispute over financial control. Thanks to MAD, Gaines is a millionaire. Kurtzman isn't.

Anyway, in 1957 Hugh Hefner gave Kurtzman the freedom to create a slick, exquisitely produced gem of a satire magazine, a more adult MAD, called TRUMP. It went *kaput* after two glorious issues.

Kurtzman and most of the disappointed artists he had gathered around him went on to self-publish HUMBUG, an ugly little duckling of a satire magazine. It was arguably the most brilliant, certainly the most idiosyncratic of all his attempts to find a format suitable to his own brand of humor. Violating every

rule of magazine marketing savvy (odd 6½" x 9½" size, odd 15¢ price, odd pukish 2-color printing) it was a Major Financial Disaster. It died in 1956 after 11 issues.

It was while recovering from the shambles of HUMBUG that Kurtzman drew THE ORGANIZATION MAN. The protagonist, Goodman Beaver, prefigures the Goodman Beaver character that was featured in a series of stories Kurtzman did with Elder in his last major attempt at a satire 'zine, HELP. (See Kitchen Sink's GOODMAN BEAVER collection. Quick.) That Goodman Beaver in turn prefigures Kurtzman's most elaborate and compromised creation, LITTLE ANNIE FANNY, appearing in PLAYBOY since 1962.

Sadly, THE ORGANIZATION MAN prefigures Kurtzman's own understandable growing disenchantment and cynicism about the world of publishing. It's a searing autobiographical work as well as trenchant reporting and incisive satire.

Unlike Goodman Beaver, Kurtzman never made off with the company payroll. His name is not a household word, except in the homes of the cognoscenti. But his influence has been wide and deep. In HELP magazine he displayed the first public works of a generation of cartoonists who grew up learning his point of view and approach to comics and humor. Beyond his genius as an editor, writer and artist, he has a rare ability to find and nurture talent. He published Robert Crumb, Gilbert Shelton, Jay Lynch, Terry Gilliam and, if the magazine had lasted just one issue longer, he would have published me. (He said so in a note on the back of my very first rejection slip.)

Kurtzman is the undisputed Godfather of the underground comics of the sixties, and, through them, his influence has been seminal on the European comics renaissance of the past 15 years.

But forget comics genealogy. I've always thought that Kurtzman's most important contribution has been in shaping (or, should I say, warping?) the minds of a generation of innocent American children. He taught them to **think**, to not confuse media reality with **real** reality.

I told Harvey that I thought he was a more significant factor than pot and LSD on the shape of the 60's. He poo-pooed me, but I found an unlikely ally on a recent segment of the TODAY show. The topic was GARBAGE PAIL KIDS. (For 20 years I've worked for Topps Bubble Gum, passing on my Kurtzman Lessons in such ephemera as WACKY PACKS, GARBAGE CAN-DY, and now, GARBAGE PAIL KIDS.) It seems that one James Manchin, State Treasurer of West Virginia, has been trying to get Acne Amy, Adam Bomb and the rest of the Kids banned in his home state.

Jane Pauley asked him: "What's the harm?"

He replied (verbatim): "Here's the harm, Jane. Over the years we've engaged in a litany of making light of so many important of our institutions. It was in the early years of Viet Nam-the **pre**-Viet Nam- when our young children were taught about social living and don't get too concerned about one's country, make light, make fun, a little social living. And I believe that produced that kind of attitude, produced a generation of young people who protested everything that came down the pike in America."

Jane Pauley asked: "You mean you associate that all with, like, MAD magazine?"

And my ally replied: "I associate with satire, making fun, making light, and it's the same with these GARBAGE PAIL KIDS..."

I'm proud. Humble, but proud. Thank you, Harvey. Thanks for everything.

- art spiegelman
new york city
July 29, 1986

...This intro turned out to be much longer than I expected. Mebbe I can get me one of those special, signed-and-numbered, deluxe, limited edition copies....

THELONIUS VIOLENCE

"THE PETER GUNN CHARACTER was the only one I used from the show. What I was trying to get was that Henry Mancini feel to the story. The jazz background gave me the rhythm of the piece. I like the rhythm and movement, especially in the karate scenes. Motion and movement within the panels was and is extremely important to me. The part where he's fighting the guy, and especially where he's giving the guy the whammy [pages 52–53] are favorites of mine.

I had *control* of this story. The action and line are good. It took me time and practice and effort to get it, but it's there. I know I have control when I can lean back and tell myself, '*That's* what I wanted to say.'"

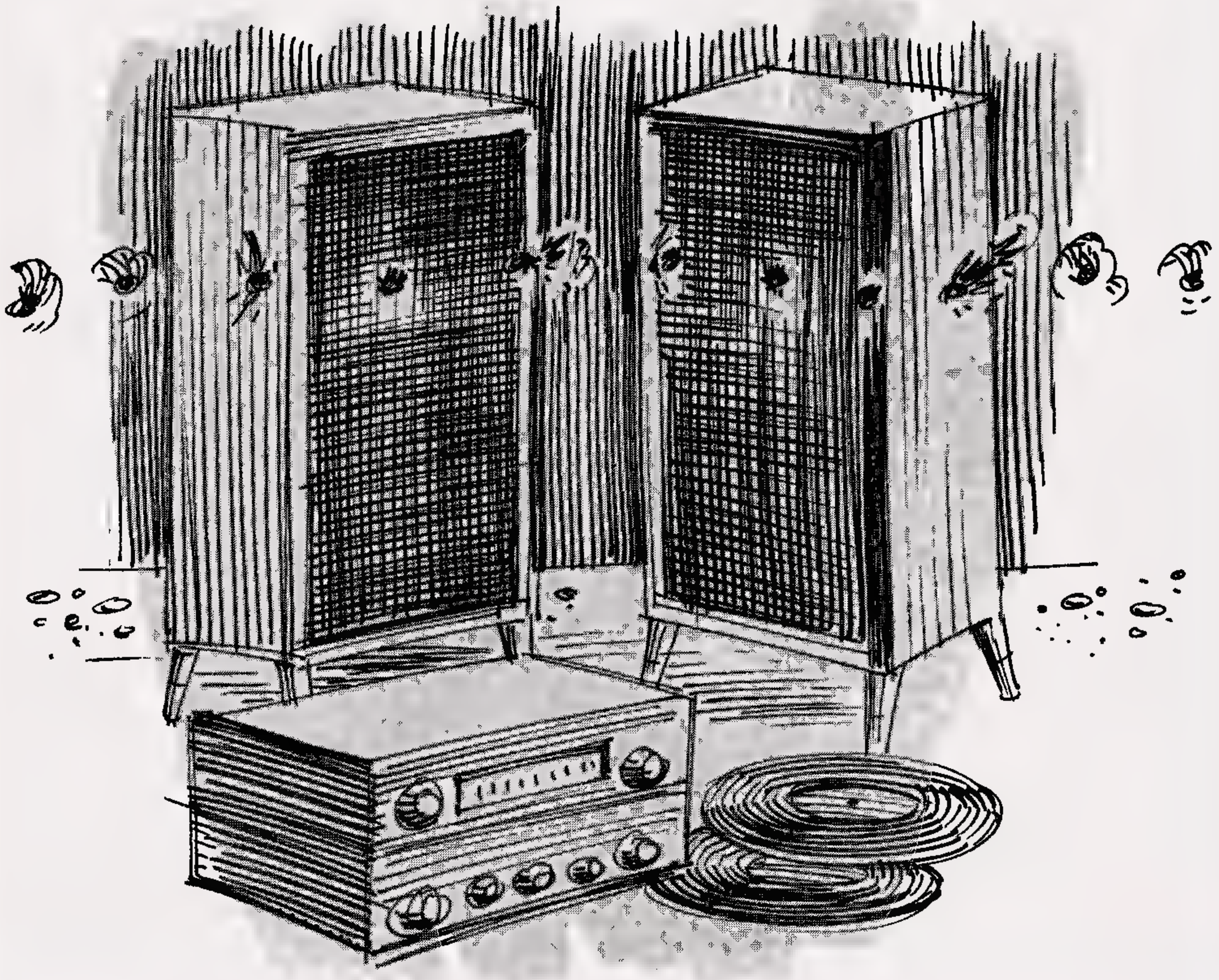
—HARVEY KURTZMAN

FROM A 1986 INTERVIEW WITH DAVE SCHREINER

Here is a
detective story with
the new sound. Like
where the culprit swings
— it is not the neck bit.

THELONIUS VIOLENCE

LIKE PRIVATE EYE




YA VOODLE-DE BLAAAH DAAAAA
DE-VOODLE-DE RAAAAAA
This Kat was laying there. He was cool. Like gone, I mean
Dead, like.
A Dixieland combo played hot licks in the background.
..His head was full of crazy lumps. He was like rapped on the skull with knucks.
Concussion by percussion and brass...
Somehow... I was suspicious of the daddio with the slide trombone.

THELONIUS VIOLENCE, PRIVATE EYE like

VA VOODLE-DE BLAH-DA DAAA
DEE DODN-DEE RAAAN

Yeah...that's a sad trumpet blowing in the darkness back there. ...That's the new sound -The new sound of jazz, you say? Oh no, man. That's the new sound of the private eye. The private eye is not the same like it was before. Today it plays different.

Before, there was the sound of the riverfront...gun-shots ...whiskey bottle clinking...fist hitting lip-sticked mouth...IBM running M.O.'s...

Now – there's the new sound ...blowing cool...Then hot... Then lowdown...Then sick. And neurotic. And disease and dying.

VA VOODLE-DE BLAH-DA RAAAAN

My name is Thelonius Violence. I'm a cool private eye. I don't have an office. That's for the square tin-badges. You can find me any time down in the Tasmanian Cellar... I dig jazz.

VA BLAH-DA DE-DOOOO.

They play cool Dixieland down there. They play crazy washboard, plumbing, skins and licorice-stick down there.

DRA-DAH DE DOOOO.

Me–I play meat...

When I don't like a square, I play a crazy riff on his face.

DEE-DOD-N DEEEEE

That's the way it was in the cellar one Friday night. The caper began as I was digging this solid chick.

She played neck.

DOD-N DOOO.

Like I mean she was vocalist.

RAN-DAAAAANNNN

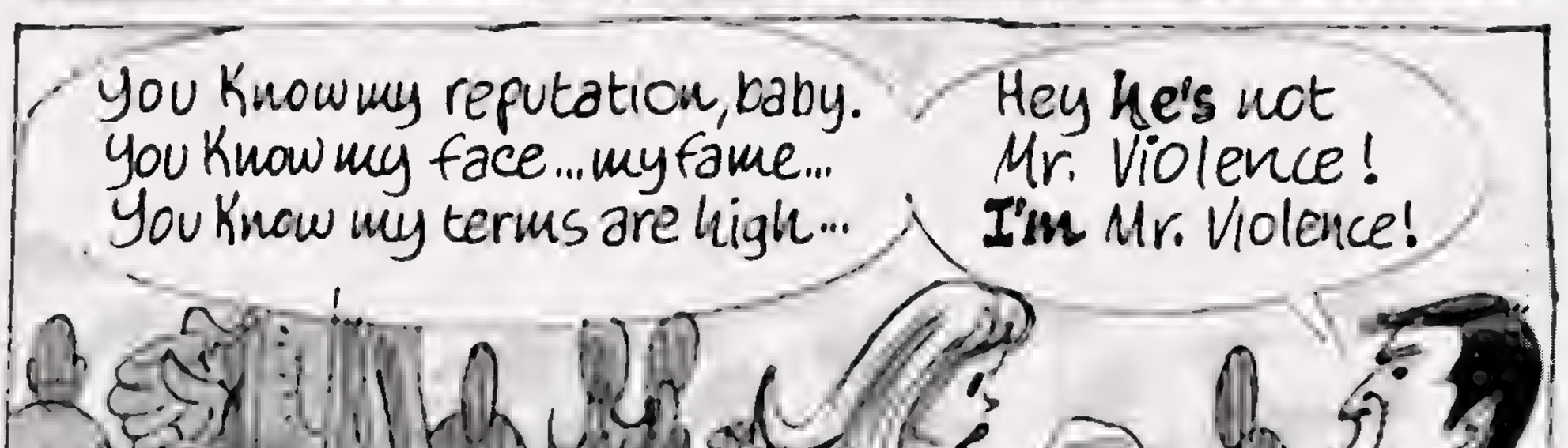
The combo was sitting on the mountain which I was sitting next to with the cigarette girl sitting on my lap. -And she wasn't selling cigarettes either... which I was sitting on. The vocalist had a twin sister. -They sang with the new sound.

It was **stereophonic!** I got rid of the cigarette girl, and the thrushes ankled over to me stereophonically and gave me a stereophonic kiss. It was then that I - saw **her!**

VA VOODLE-DEBLAH[ma]


Lolita Nabakov!
She was a lovely young thing-Why I was almost old enough to be her father. ...SO?
...Loretta Young is almost old enough to be my mother.
-She came straight to my table. I-I guess my reputation had gotten around.


Mr Violence...
I heard about you.
I need your help.


You Know my reputation, baby.
You Know my face...my fame...
You Know my terms are high...
Hey He's not Mr. Violence!
I'm Mr. Violence!

Seymour Violence? I got your name from your postal-card advertisment in the mail. I need a detective.

Thelonius Violence!

Like I said, I don't come cheap.

Would you like some-thing?

Waiter. Bring some club soda-

Separate checks.

I get $80 a day - plus expenses plus state and city tax plus so-cial security ... Expensive, I ad-mit - but you know ... cheap is cheap.

Your check, sir!

Ex-cuse me. I want to add...

SO MUCH? All I had was a beer! - It's 10¢ less anywhere else!

What a gyp-joint.

like I was saying, chick, if you can pay my fee, then relate to me your story.

What's your trouble, bubbie? Is it a national crime ring?

No.

An international incident, then?

No.

The Mafia, eh?

No.

It's exam cheating.

Man... not that I want to be a big bug, but I'm asking you to lay off this caper or you'll be fractured.

Like I mean the light will be switched off !

SIGH- try as one might, one cannot avoid occasionally getting into these things. Excuse me while I put in the mouth-piece... head protector.. gloves.. **not that this happens too often**... -Would you sprinkle some of this rosin around?

YAWN O


Ready, boys...? and one and two and three...
GUNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK!
GUNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK!


GA-GUNK! GUNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK!
GUNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! BLEEAAAAP!



When I came to-
YA-YOODLE-DE BLAH DAAAA!!
-man, what a gas. Things were in very bad shape-except the chicks. There was nothing wrong with their shape-**Oh** yes.

I was all cut up...well not really **cut** up-I was scratched up. But they were only **old** scratches... **scars** really. One scar from seven fights back-another scar from thirty-two fights back.

Out of a total of 154 fights, I had 2 scars 16 ruined bars, 29 wrecked apartments, an assortment of damaged offices.

-factories - waterfront warehouses- -I was lucky, I guess. The scars didn't show. Who knows, maybe I had internal injuries.

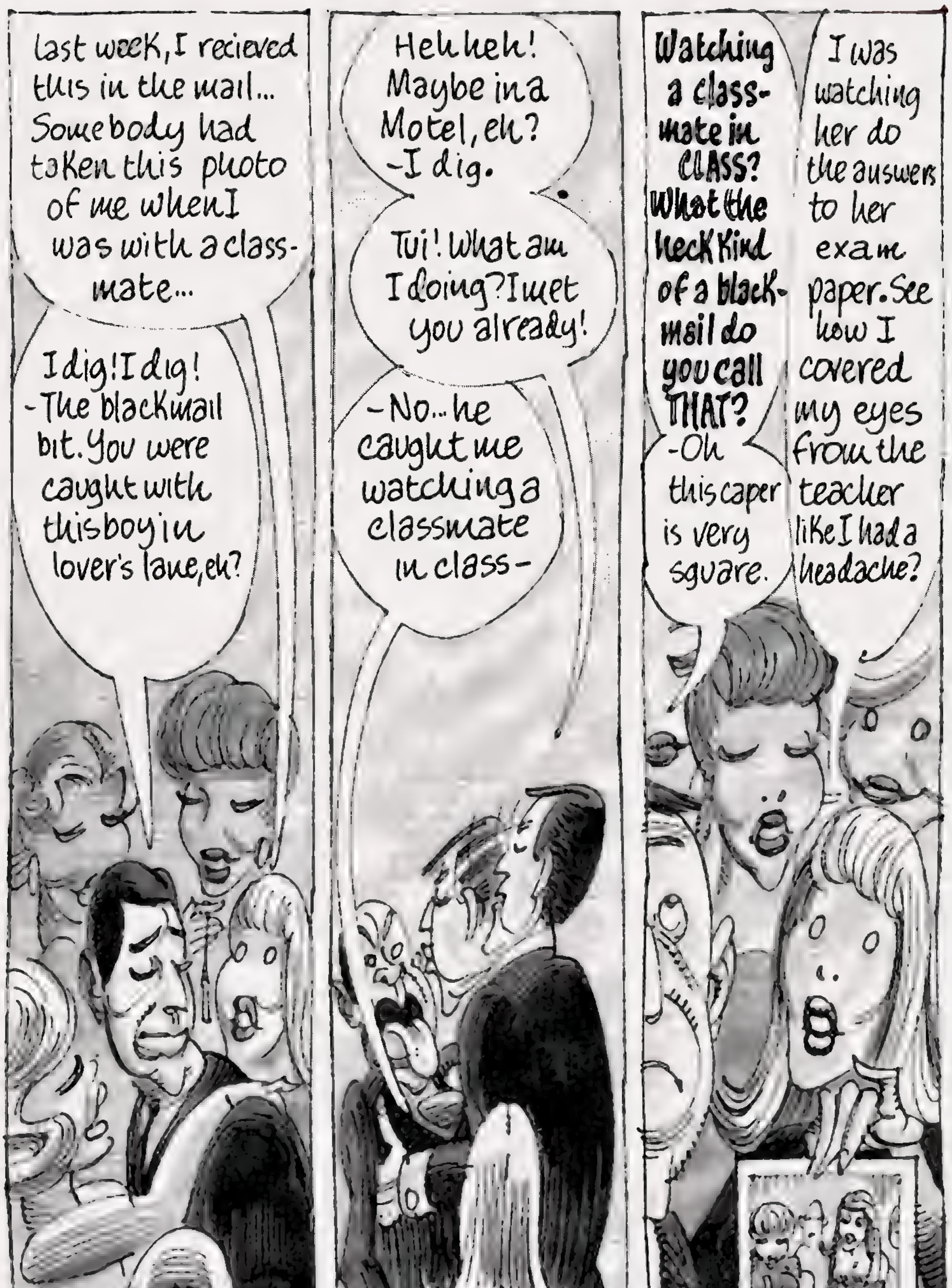
But I had to think - and what with the jumble of tables, spilled drinks, chair legs -and the gin clay legs on the cigarette girl- I bit

We hopped a rented Jag and headed for the Kid's pad where I'd be able to think, undistracted by all that eye-salve back there.


We left the bodies by Fisher far behind—
and headed for the more placid environs of the family digging.
GUNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK-
I was glad to leave the exhilarating world of the private eye and enter the straight narrows of the home folks, where
I was introduced to the family—her sisters—
YA YOODLE-DE BLAAH-DAAAAAAAAA
sisters Ava, Magda and Zaza, and her father, Jolie.
—And you should have seen the French maid on the way in.
YA YOODLE-DE BLAH-DA DAAAAAAA
—Well...I guess you just can't escape the ugly face of crime.
AAAAAAAA


Father...I want you to meet Thelonius Violence, He's a detective.
Crazy, pops. Slip me some skin.
Detective? What kind of detective is this?
He doesn't look like any kind of detective I'm used to seeing.
He's not a Sherlock-Holmes type detective.
Go ahead, Violence! Deduce something. Tell me my birthday from looking at this old hat!
He doesn't look like he could make one deduction.
This is Ava.


He's not a Charlie-Chan-wise-old-detective type.
Magda.
He couldn't even be number one son!
He might be a Sam Spade detective type
But he doesn't even have a hat or a trench-coat.
What's an M.O., Violence?
What's an A.P.B.?
Who's the F.B.I. of the F.B.I?
He's not even a Dragnet type.—No realism.
He's not a detective. He's a defective!
While I'm looking around Lolita, tell me the story
Zaza.


last week, I recieved this in the mail... Somebody had taken this photo of me when I was with a class-mate...
I dig! I dig! -The blackmail bit. You were caught with this boy in lover's lane, eh?
Heh heh! Maybe in a Motel, eh? -I dig.
Tui! What am I doing? I met you already!
-No... he caught me watching a classmate in class-
Watching a class-mate in CLASS? What the heck kind of a black-mail do you call THAT?
-Oh this caper is very square.
I was watching her do the answers to her exam paper. See how I covered my eyes from the teacher like I had a headache?

A message here demands $1000 or the photo will be sent to the Dean.

We don't want scandal so I didn't call the police And that's the story.

- Now look, baby. If you want me to help you... don't you think you ought to tell me the whole story?

But... But.. -sob- that's all there is to tell.

Then give the case to someone else, baby!

-All right! I'll tell you everything. The $1000 is to be in one dollar bills.

That's much better...

Now just let me take a look around here !

But Mr. Violence! Don't you think you ought to go and take a look around the school grounds?

Not yet, baby. -You just **don't** dig detective work...

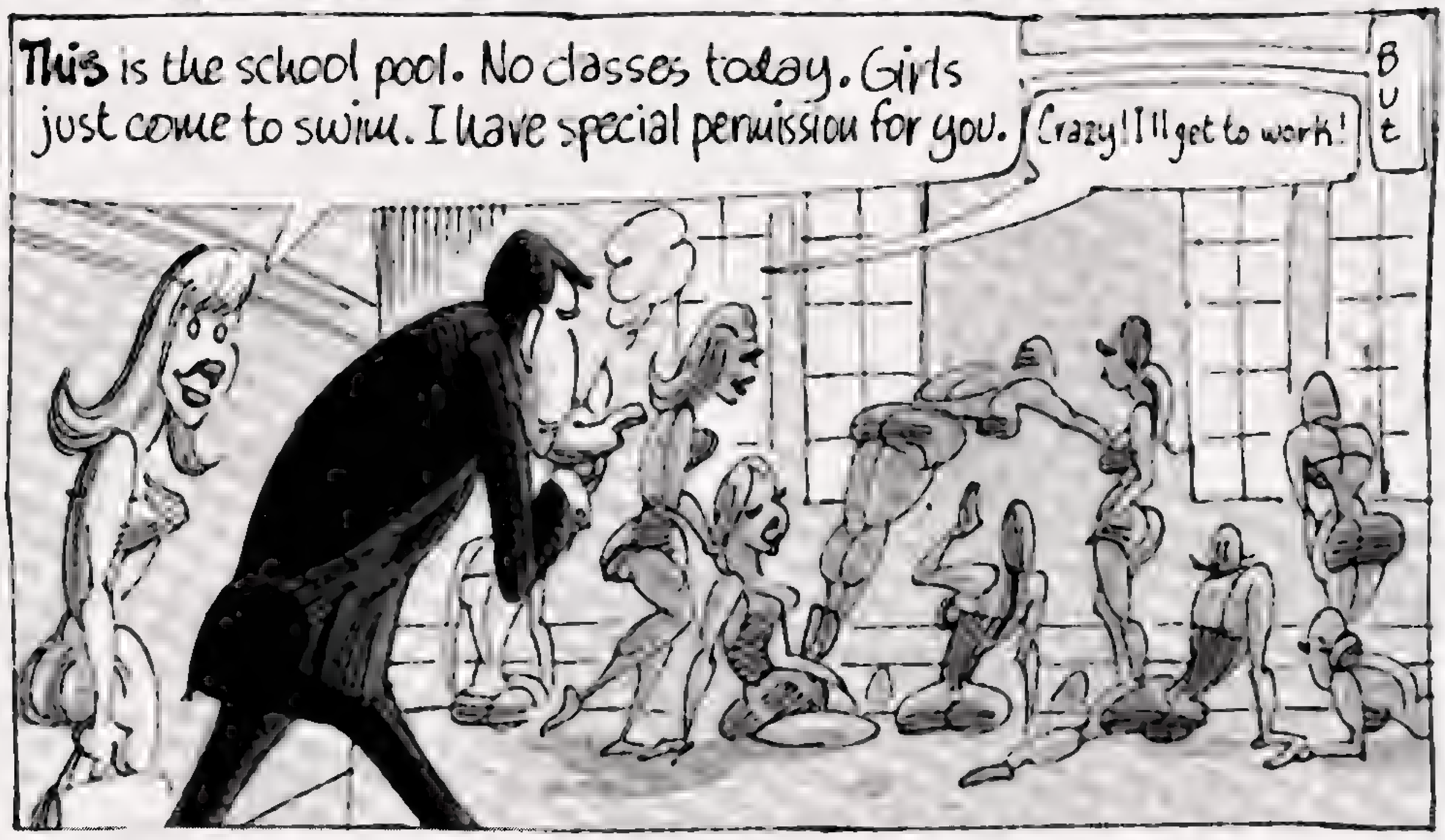
But I'm supposed to leave the money on the school grounds...the **Seraglio School For Young Ladies.**

and we ought to go look around the school grounds **NOW!**

GUNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK! UNK!-
Next morning I rented a Ford. I'd change it for a Jag. We drove out to the school past lush estates. The loot was to be split in 2 packages-one to be dropped in the school pool. We'd get directions on the other later. Meanwhile, I would hide underwater...you know- the skin-diving bit.—The pool was luxurious. There were girls lounging all over. Man! Endsville! —But don't let anyone tell you an eye's life is a piece of cake either. Water plays hob with my sinuses.—First I questioned suspects... the likely — and the unlikely, man-

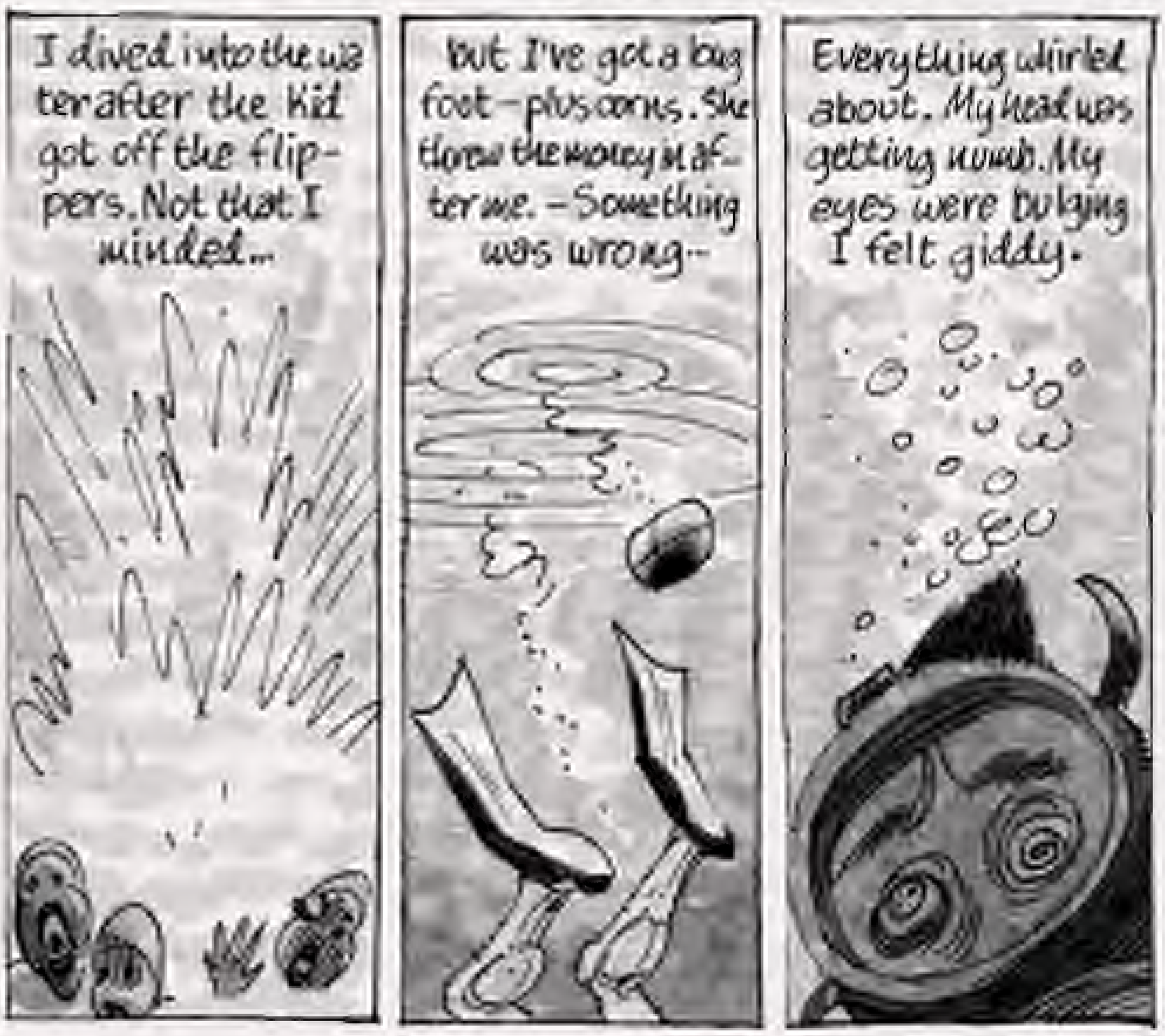



I must get facts!
What's your phone number, punkin?
But Mr Violence! What facts can you learn here at the local country club?


This is the school pool. No classes today. Girls just come to swim. I have special permission for you.
Crazy! I'll get to work!
But


By George - I forgot to change into my bathing suit!
There's a men's locker on the other side. I'll meet you here in 5 minutes.


Baby! Now that I bounce the eyeballs off the bikini, I'm stoned! I- I cannot move-
Does that mean you like me, Thelonius?
It means like you're standing on my flippers, baby!


I dived into the water after the kid got off the flippers. Not that I minded...
But I've got a big foot - plus arms. She threw the money in after me. - Something was wrong--
Everything whirled about. My head was getting numb. My eyes were bulging I felt giddy.

At first I thought it was the crazy scenery—
YA VOODL-DEE BLAAH-DAAA...
And then I dug the bit. There was no oxygen coming from the tank. And no wonder—there was **no tank.** I'd forgotten it in my haste to get under the water...
RAAA-DAAAAAAAAA...


Is he drowned?
Give him artificial respiration.
Yeah! -The crazy Kind where they breathe directly into the mouth
Mr. Violence! The money at the bottom of the pool is GONE!
Cool gone or culled gone?
Oh man-I want out! I've got to go where I can dig... where I can think things out!
But every where you go- you're surrounded by girls.
Well anywhere couldn't be worse than this! I'll follow up the postmark on the blackmail note... Where was it from?
Atlantic city.
Aren't they having the Miss America contest this week?

YA VOODLE-DE BLAHH-DAHAA..

That night we went to the Azarbajanian crawlspace to await instructions for the second $500 pick-up. It was good to get away from that school atmosphere - I mean like it was too wholesome like. I wouldn't swing until I got some foul-smelling cellar air into my system.

SKIPPELY BOOTEN Doooo.

We were digging a very cool combo whose style was the outest. I mean they didn't riff, or flog it, or fake it. I mean their bit was outer space like I mean it was **MEDITATION.**



OH WHAT KICKS!

Oh square man-Cube Ain't you with it yet? I told you to lay off this caper.

Oh! It's him again!

Well if it isn't **Jack**! Ive been seeking you, **William**. We've got a debt to settle, **Harry**. I'd like to pay you back **Allen**.

Take the check, honey I'll be right with you.

The last time we met, you caught me by surprise **Arnold**! Hit me in the stomach while I was talking -

While I wasn't ready, **Renfrew**. But not this time, **Charlemagne**! OH no! This time I'm ready **Sheldon**!


GUNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK!


Now hold on WINSTON! You did it again! If you want to play that way FRANKUN-


that's OK by ME...
GUNK UNK UNK-

O.K. **Seymour!** let's play rough! I have some of my **own** tricks. I didn't spend 2 years in the Marines fighting Japs for **nothing!**

Like for instance making the whammy bad-luck sign! I know plenty secret tricks!

GUNK! UNK! UNK!

UNK! UNK!

UNK! UNK! UNK!

黑


GUNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK! UNK!
GUNK! UNK! UNK!
UNK! UNK!
RIKKY TIKKY

DOOWUSHKA DOONSBKA

木

VO-DO-DE-O-DO

TOM TOM TOM TOM TOM TOM TOM TOM

ㄅㄆㄇ

POK!

ALVIN! Put down that MARIMBA!

DOODLE-DE BLAHT! BLAHT! BLAHT! BLAAAAHT!


VA VOODLE-DE BLAAH-DAAAAA
When it was all over... the Azarbajanian Crawlspace was the Azarbajanian Nospace. The room was wrecked. The combo was no longer comborated. The mountain was littered with bent plumbing, catgut and elephant's teeth. I was in trouble too. I had a smudge on my shirt-cuff that I didn't think would come out at the cleaners...
VA VOODLE-DE BLEEE DAAAAAA...
Meanwhile, Irving had pulled out a pepper-pot, so I reached for my ears. Selwyn could've pulled the rod sooner, I guess but then we wouldn't have had the fight bit which was such kicks for both us and you.

All right, gumshoe... You and the doll- into the back- room. I'm going- ing to leave you leaning, man.

But if you're going to **chop** me, **Ned** - why here in the back room?

There's a red, blinking neon-sign outside the back-room window just like in the movies... and I **do dig atmosphere!**

I dig you ...Go Go man!

Got any prayers to say before I iron you out Dad?

Wait! Wait! Since you're going to Kill us, **Marvin** you might as well tell us who it is behind the blackmail attempt on my client.

Check-o-roonie! I might as well... Actually, I am merely a front for a larger group who aren't really interested in blackmail. That's just a cover-up.

You see... Shir-Cliff who heads the group Knew too much. He Knew he had to get rid of Sonny Tufts 'if the Rajpur diamond was to be safe. -Well... Revent- low wanted the diamond- and as everyone knows-

...Reventlow is the boss!

That's all I wanted to Know Buster!

Wait! Wait!

Give me back the gun. I'm not finished yet. Reventlow was only a stooge...

All the time he **Knew** where Castro was getting his arms from. **That's** why Batista hired Lichenstien to carry the message which fell into the hands of Zapata's henchmen.

And all the time, they were receiving their instructions from an innocuous little photographer from Philadelphia who was really Mr. Big...

...and whose name is **Seymour Medwick!**

That's all I wanted to Know Buster!

Wait! Wait! Wait! Give me back the gun! There's more!

Medwick was a plant. The stakes were much higher. Little did Reventlow Know he'd been dealing all the time with the **real** boss... **NIKITA KRUSHCHEV!**

That's all etc...

OK, baby... we've got all the jazz we need to break this racket.

But the money, Thelonius. I gave him the second $500.

let's cut out now and take this Kat to the Irish club-house.

But ... the money...

Then I'll follow the Atlantic City clue.

But Thelonius ...

Halt, you crook! I'm a detective!

No! I'm a detective! You are a crook!

Wait! I'm the crook! He's a detective!

He's the cretective! You're a dook!

Fa th er!

lolita, dear-that is Mr. Krelm, a **real** detective. While Mr. Violence was in a night club, Mr. Krelm was in the Police Files looking up Thelonius Violence **alias** Peter Luger **alias** Tom Mauser **alias** Murray Shniederman-**extortionist**.

Yes...and the reason he is a blackmailer and extortionist is he likes to play detective...the kind that hangs out at the night clubs with girls and like that. —Why goodness knows it's difficult to be one of **them** detectives and make ends meet. It's **impossible** to be like **them** detectives. No matter **how** hard I work and sweat, it's impossible what with all the routine and paperwork and overhead. The way Violence worked it is, he would set it up with his partner here. They would choose a victim with money — They would then dig a skeleton out of her closet and set up a blackmail plot with lots of wine-women and fake fights.

Man—I do not **fake!** I **play meat!** I go for **blood**, man.

OK! Get moving, you two.

Slow, man, slow! You're hurting my wrist!

Please! No brutality! I'll report you for brutality.


GUNK! UNK! UNK!
I'm working now... doing honest work... strictly legit' and on the up and up.
UNK! UNK!
I got the wildest fight scenes- just like in the old days. And the only kind of scratch I get is the green kind ...you know... loot! Man I'm loaded!
理
UNK! UNK! UNK...
And I got the craziest sickest chicks flipping over me all around -ohh yesss-


I still play neat. We're a two man combo, my partner and I. We're billed as the Fang-Toothed Crew-cuts. We're a tagteam like — Morris. We come on with stereos of Stan-the-Man in the background and we swing with the beat. And the kats we run into — THE* END*CRAZY — ohh yess. I do dig this wrestling the most!
Ohhhh yesss...
VADDLE-DE BLAAHT! BLAAHT!
BLAAAHHHHHHT CHUNKL
like the very end.



THE ORGANIZATION MAN IN THE GREY FLANNEL EXECUTIVE SUITE



"OF COURSE, I'd been deep in the publishing business for years, putting together winners and losers. Here, I was probably thinking of Martin Goodman of Timely [which became Marvel], for whom I once did a puzzle page.

Before the age of computers, Goodman had an elaborate system of checking the circulation of magazines and books on the stands. Not just his magazines, *all* magazines. From this complex system he'd determine what was hot, and when he found a winner, he copied it.

When you go into a business, you can either have the attitude of doing something with it, or draining it. It's an eternal conflict, an old story. I guess I was looking at that here. I used Hugh Hefner as the model for the editor of the girlie magazine, and I had Burt Lancaster in mind as the model for the men's magazine editor. It's interesting about those men's magazines; I guess they've disappeared altogether. I think they were pushed out by the skin magazines. Isn't that amazing? Is there a relationship between sex and violence? Are they connected? *Argosy*, *True*, they're all gone."

—HARVEY KURTZMAN

FROM A 1986 INTERVIEW WITH DAVE SCHREINER

Here is a
story of the human
side of big business
— its message... though
the business world may
look cold and rotten on
the surface, underneath
...well underneath it's much rottener.

The Organization Man In The Grey Flannel Executive Suite




Krelm has done it again. ...First the railroads ...and now he's corned the utilities.
Not to mention the hotels he's financing.
All the while I mortgaged property ...Krelm banked his capital.
All my investments are gone except Baltic Avenue. I'm ruined!
L-let me have credit, Krelm. Soon I'll pass 'GO' and collect $200.
I've got to take all Monopoly set home or my Mother will kill me.

THE ORGANIZATION MAN IN THE GREY FLANNEL EXECUTIVE SUITE

The grey-flannel belt stretching along New York's mid-town Madison Avenue area is colored by a family of communication industries, not the least of which is magazine publishing...Not the kind where Bette Davis okays layouts in a picture-windowed penthouse, but the shirt-sleeve publishing of the hundreds of commonplace titles that inundate your news-stands.

Here, executives wielding pens mightier than swords send ideas coursing through the veins of a nation, and affecting the thinking of millions.

And here, important decisions are made. Vital magazine trends are established ...a new pocket-sized crossword-puzzle book...a new horror-monster book fad...

These and other essential products of the magazine press are published more often than not as part of a string of publications by a single corporation or corporate group.

One of the larger of these groups was Shlock Publications Inc., million-dollar empire of crafty Lucifer Shlock, publisher and president of the board... with over 100 titles, to say nothing of side properties in advertising, distribution and printing.

Into this milieu bounded young Goodman Beaver... fresh and eager from a college Executive's School ... full of intellect, ideals, and moral convictions, with a burning enthusiasm to create new things...good things for better living for his fellow man.

This idiot comes bounding in...and the following is the trouble he caused...

How do you do, sir. My name is Goodman Beaver...

I'll be working at Shlock Publications and I want to know everyone connected with the organization.

But...

But...

But...

...But I'm only the elevator man...

That's all right! I want to know everyone in the building, from elevator man to President here at 488.

But...

But...

But...

...But this is only 484. 488 is two buildings down.

Well... ha! I'll want to know every one on the block!

Ah! Here it is... Shlock Publications Inc.! ...Confidence, Goodman! Don't be nervous. Look casual! Get off your knees...

This is it, Goodman... the publishing world! Sharp looking executives with crew haircuts... secretaries right out of Vogue... conferring... collaborating... discussing... producing the words that will be printed many millions of times... words to be read from the Golden Gate to the [illegible] Building ... people reading magazines the country o'er... and right here are the fabulous men and women who are intently creating the actual material **right before my very eyes.**

Are you ordering coffee?

I just had coffee.

Coffee?

I could go for a coffee.

If you send down for coffee, the place next block makes the best coffee.

Excuse me, girls. That must be Goodman Beaver, the new editor we're hiring.

I'm sending down for a second order for coffee.

Can you get me a Danish with my coffee?

Make my coffee light. I had three dark coffees in a row.

Goodman Beaver's my name, sir!

¿Verdad quesi?

Mr. Beaver? I'm Mike Verifax, Mr. Shlock's secretary. Welcome to our organization.

Mr. Shlock asked me to show you around. You'll put your things in here.

Aha! This is the clothes closet!

Oh no... This is your office. You'll share it with another editor, Mr. Eolith.

Share this crowded office? Come on, Mike Honey! Get him outta here!

I understand your consternation, sir...

I can appreciate the seriousness of your work which takes dedication and concentration and I assure you once I am settled, I will create no distractions from your work, sir!

Come on Mike. Let's run down for drinks

Of course I'll need a few things, Miss Verifax. You'll assign me a secretary, and I'll need a research assistant...

A Martini- my treat! Come on.

Then... then I'll be able to...er... use a Martini- I mean a typwriter!

Come on, Mike honey. A quick in-trail.

...and stationery with corporation lighball ER I MEAN letterhead!

I can use a Dictaphone, Petty Cash Vouchers

Petty Cash? Dictaphones?... Beaver! In time, you'll learn Mr. Slwock's publishing dictum ...keep the investment low... the income high... and the margin of profit wide.

...and now that you've met 'itchy fingers' let's meet the other executives

Oh sure! Now come meet 'twinkle paws', 'under-mitts', 'grapple hooks' and 'the grabber!'

He- he's fairly un-principled, eh? Not like most, eh?

Will I meet Mr Shlock today? I don't even know what he looks like.

Mr. Shlock has called a meeting of executives in his office. It will give you a chance to meet everybody at once.

That very important looking gentleman... that's Mr. Shlock, eh?

No... This is Mr. Bella Donna.. the editor of our monster book, 'KILL'.

I hold him off with mirrors.

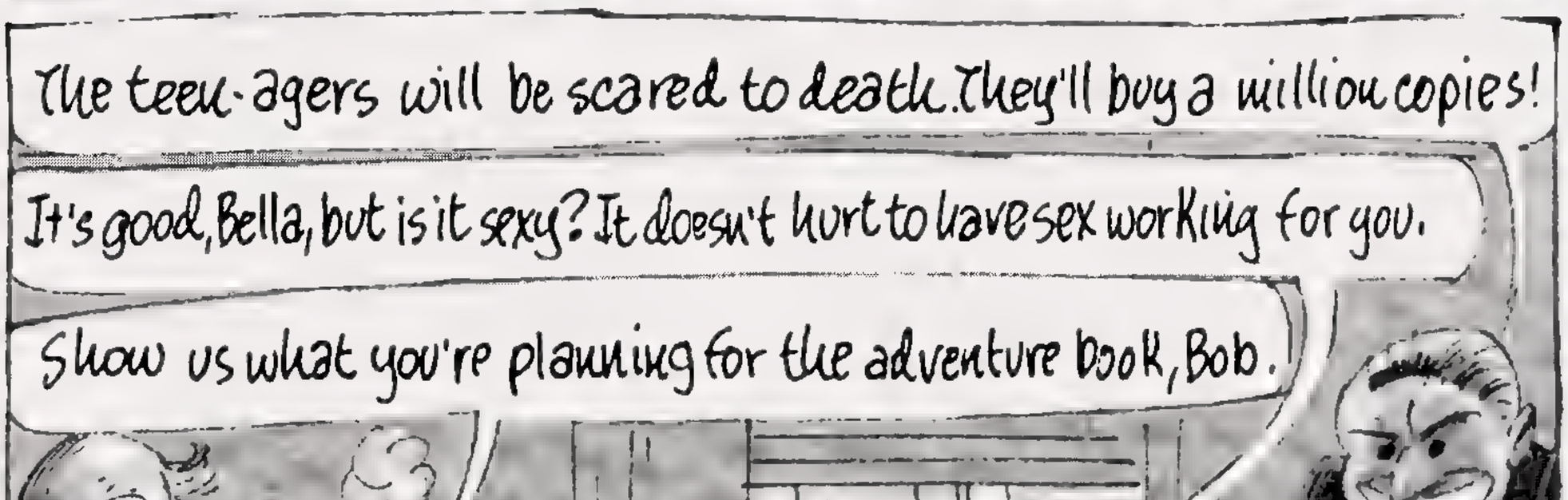
Ah-hah! Then **this** is Mr. Shlock.

No... this is Mr. Robert Roark... editor of our adventure book... 'MEN'S SWEAT'!


Ah... then this is Mr. Shlock?
No... this is Hugh Hare, editor of our young man's book. WHOOBOY!
Now I want you to meet-
The office shoe-shine man, eh?
No!
This is Mr. EEEK Shlock!
Mr. Shlock. I'm indeed honored that you were impressed by my résumé and by my abilities in the use of the English language to qualify me out of the many applicants as the editor you were seeking.
You was cheapest, Kid.
I trust you all have meeted our newest editor, Goodman Beaver, who will help ol' Charlie Eolith with the crossword-puzzle-books.
Help me?
Now let's get down to the business at hand... and in respect to what I am about to ask, I want quick, sure decisions... namely, how many want coffee with toasted pound?
Coffee, no pound.
Danish!
Coffee.


Bella! What have you got in this month's line-up for the monster-books?
I luv pick up som exclew-sive stills from a new horror film called THE THING THAT FRIGHTENED THE THING
Did you get them cheap?
I got them free.
Not cheap e-nough. Get the film company to pay. It's pub-licity for them.
Here are the stills.


ugh
AAAGH
OH NO!
rrretch
ENOUGH
TAKE IT AWAY!


The teen-agers will be scared to death. They'll buy a million copies!
It's good, Bella, but is it sexy? It doesn't hurt to have sex working for you.
Show us what you're planning for the adventure book, Bob.


I have some rugged he-man stuff planned which I'd like to show you.
Give me your opin-ions...
...or I'll PUNCH YOU IN THE NOSE!


I've got a sea story... 'I SAW THE BARRA CUDA RIP OUT MY FRIEND'S GUTS.
Good!
A hunting story... WHY A PANTHER RIPPED OUT MY GUTS!
Good!
Jungle story- THE CANNI-BALS RIPPED OUT HIS GUTS AND ATE THEM.
Great!
Finally... WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS ADMIN ISTRATION.
Wha?
Now Roark! Let's get vicious!


I don't think the admini-stration is doing a bad job.
But I thought a political ar-ticle would add class...
Politics have no place in our mag-azines.
Luckily I've got a replacement... I SAW THE NKVD RIP OUT HER GUTS.
That's much much better Bob.
I like that touch of sex.

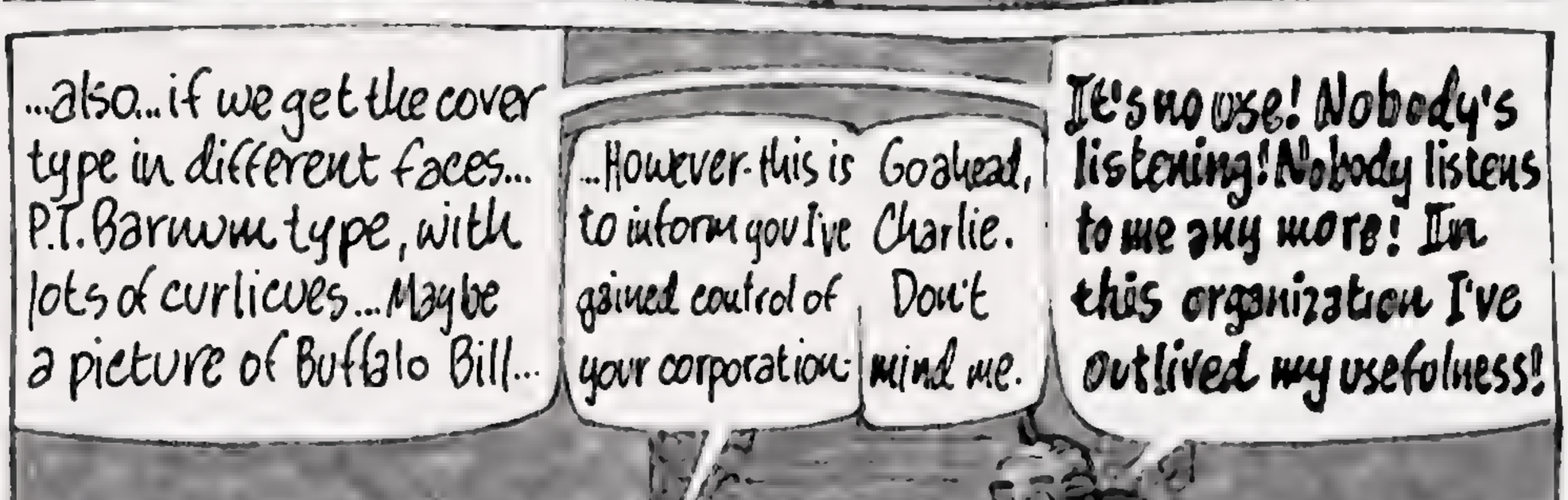

What you got for the young-man's book, Hare?
I've got something fantastic, boss. You know the fold-out pin-up we run in WHOOBOY along with our competitors? Well-I've got a fold-out here to end all fold-outs.


This will be the biggest fold out in the WHOLE WORLD!
And the text will tell all about the girl here... the real girl... the good and bad sides of her personality I'm going to present sex with a viewpoint.
Sex with a view-point?


We should have a viewpoint! What good is a man without a viewpoint. It is our duty to our public as journalists... as communicators... to have a viewpoint.
Whose viewpoint?
Why yours, boss.


Well, gentlemen...I hope you got some fresh ideas here. We've discussed everything worth discussing and I think we can adjourn..
Wait a minute! What about my cross-word-puzzle books...
OK... let's cover that ...but snap it up, Charlie.
'Meanwhile, take a letter, Mike..
Go ahead Chuck.


I've got a great gimmick to stimulate sales of the cross-word puzzle-books...
Dear Sam: I enjoyed the dinner at your house the other evening...
Go ahead, Charlie... I'm listening...
I thought we might stick pencils in with the books.
aw-Simon and Shuster did that 30 years ago.


...also...if we get the cover type in different faces... P.T. Barnum type, with lots of curlicues...Maybe a picture of Buffalo Bill...
...However-this is to inform you I've gained control of your corporation-
Go ahead, Charlie. Don't mind me.
It's no use! Nobody's listening! Nobody listens to me any more! In this organization I've outlived my usefulness!

That's not true. I'm listening, Mr. Eolith. Why... if you weren't any use, you wouldn't be here, would you?

You mean I'd be fired, HAH? When you're an old executive, you just don't get fired. We're too civilized. They make you feel so useless, you finally have to quit.

Now now, Charlie... don't talk foolish. Now relax. Go take a walk and get these foolish ideas out of your head and bring back the coffee order like I asked you. And remember... no butter on my English.

No butter on the English!

Poster type!

Curlicues!

...Well... why not? Why not, Mr. Shlock? Why discourage Mr. Eolith from doing all those little things?

Never mind why not. Why yes.

Well... I know those curlicues and fancy type faces won't sell crossword puzzle books... but it won't make that much difference and Mr. Eolith will be happy... and it'll be... well... just a **nice thing**. That's all.

(Gasp) A nice thing!


He wants to do 'nice things'!
Well... it may not be good business... but people will think well of us if we do.
'People will think well of us!'
HAHA HAHA


And after all... deep down inside, you'll feel better for it.
FEEL BETTER INSIDE!
HOOOO HAHA HEEE WOOHOO
Somehow I get the feeling I'm moving in the wrong direction.
Gentlemen. Gentlemen. Let's have a little order here. After all, Mr. Beaver is new at the business and his intentions are good.
HO HO WOOF

For his sake and to refresh the rest of your memories, I again repeat my dictum of magazine publishing. We keep our investment low... our income high and our margin of profit wide... And the way we put out the cross-word book is...

Right.

Since cover stock accounts for half our production costs, we'll eliminate the expensive cover stock and print covers directly on the first and last pages of the body. Nobody will know the difference and we'll cut costs 50% of our gross.

Brilliant!

We'll reprint old puzzles from the files in a new order, thus cutting our editorial costs... and if we cut costs on the body of the book the same as we do on the covers, we'll have a margin of profit of 100% of the gross.

Genius!

But Mr. Shlock ...if you eliminate the cover...and you eliminate the body...there's nothing left to sell. And there will be no profit.

Nothing left to sell..

Nothing left-

Nothing left-

Hmmmm-

By Golly-- he's right! There IS nothing left!

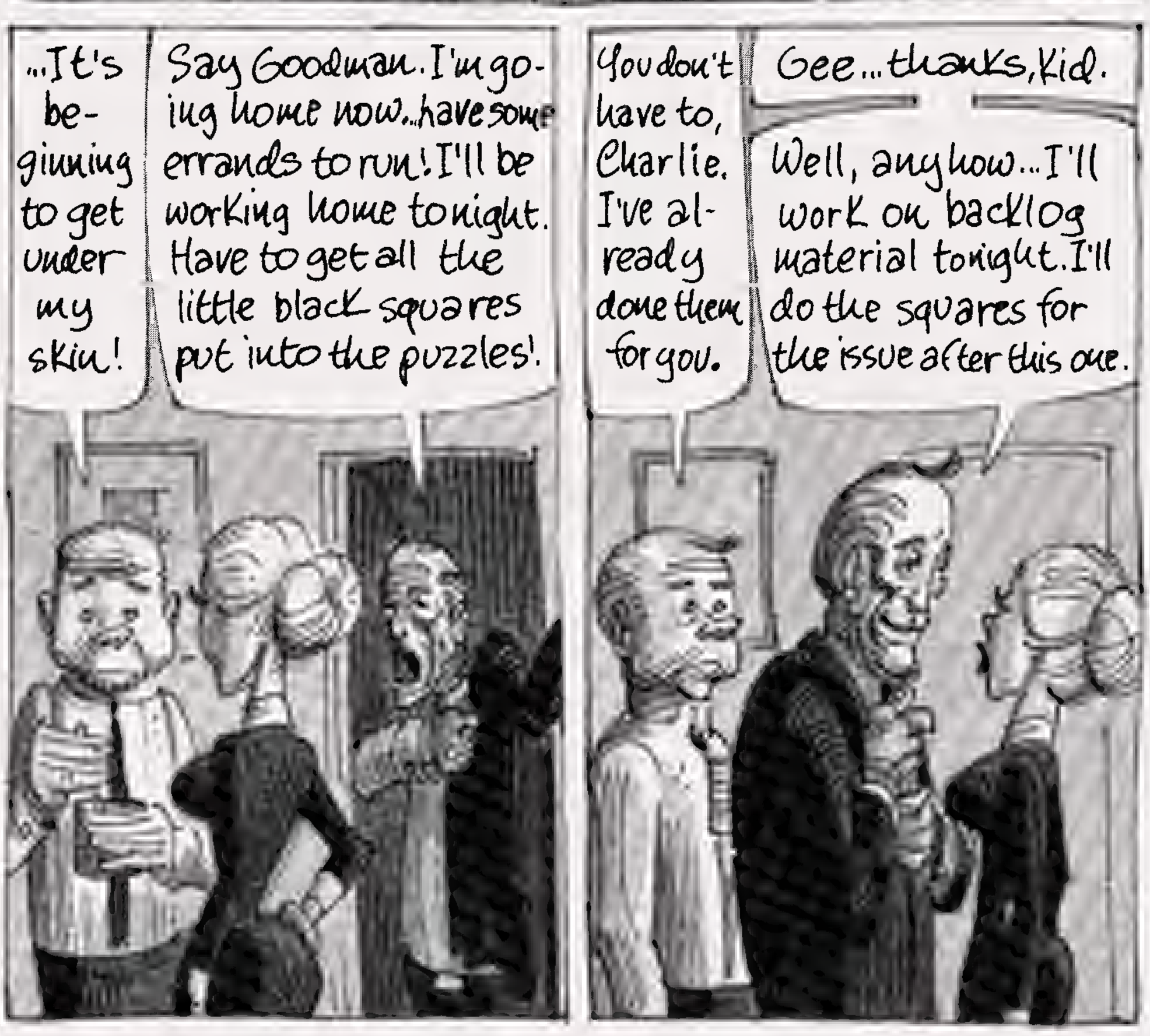
We have to admit-- He's right!

Goodman...I like a boy like you! You're a little bit too radical but you're smart! You're a thinker!

I hear you want a typwriter! I'll get you one. From now on, Charlie Eolith's typwriter is yours.

TIME LAPSE


Time for coffee-break, Goodman. I'll bring you a spoon and sugar...
I'm coming out, thanks, Mike. I've got to talk to someone. To you... About my work here... about this whole place.


...It's beginning to get under my skin!
Say Goodman. I'm going home now... have some errands to run! I'll be working home tonight. Have to get all the little black squares put into the puzzles!
You don't have to, Charlie. I've already done them for you.
Gee... thanks, Kid.
Well, anyhow... I'll work on backlog material tonight. I'll do the squares for the issue after this one.


Well... I'm already working on that too, Charlie.
...you don't have to, Kid. I'll do the backlog.
Let me put it this way, Charlie. Mr. Shlock has asked me to take over doing all the cross-word puzzle squares.
You? Takeover? So he's taken that away from me too. For five years I've put in the little black squares, and now he's taken that away from me.
And you, fresh young punk! bit by bit taking over my office... my typwriter... my crossword puzzle squares— WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?

Now wait a minute, Charlie! You'd better face facts! That system of yours of ruling the dark squares with diagonal shading is slow... old fashioned. I can do ten times as many squares in the same time as you by making them solid black!

But... but the thin lines... th-they were- nice.

Do they do anything to keep the investment down? ...the margin of profit wide? **Face it! They're a waste of time, Eolith, AND YOU KNOW IT!**

SLAM!

EXIT

... I guess I was mean-

That's what I meant about this whole set-up, Mike. I'm changing. My goals... my ideals... I feel I'm getting to be just like the others—

I'm beginning to feel that too...

TIME LAPSE

"You wanted to see me before I left, Mr. Shlock?

Yes, Goodman. I've been meaning to tell you what a good job you've been doing lately. I like the way you've been doing the puzzles.. the way you slip in lots of black boxes in the crosswords to speed production. You're learning, my boy

SHLOCK!

Charlie! What do you want! I thought I told you to go to the bank!

Go get your OWN deposit slips!

Move me into the stockroom will you?

Lucifer! We grew up in this business together. I worked with you when your publications still weren't legal.

I can take the stock-room. I can take the errands! But THIS -THIS SIGN! YOU MAKE ME WEAK!

Have you seen the latest MEN'S SWEAT. OUT TODAY

Charlie! You Know I've never run my Corporation with an iron fist. You Know you've always had full freedom to work ... and full freedom to quit!

shuffle shuffle

That's what you'd like, isn't it, Lucifer. Well I'm not going to quit! I'm going to KILL myself, AND YOU CAN'T STOP ME!

Who said you can't kill yourself? I give my executives **complete** freedom as much as possible.

hmmm hum

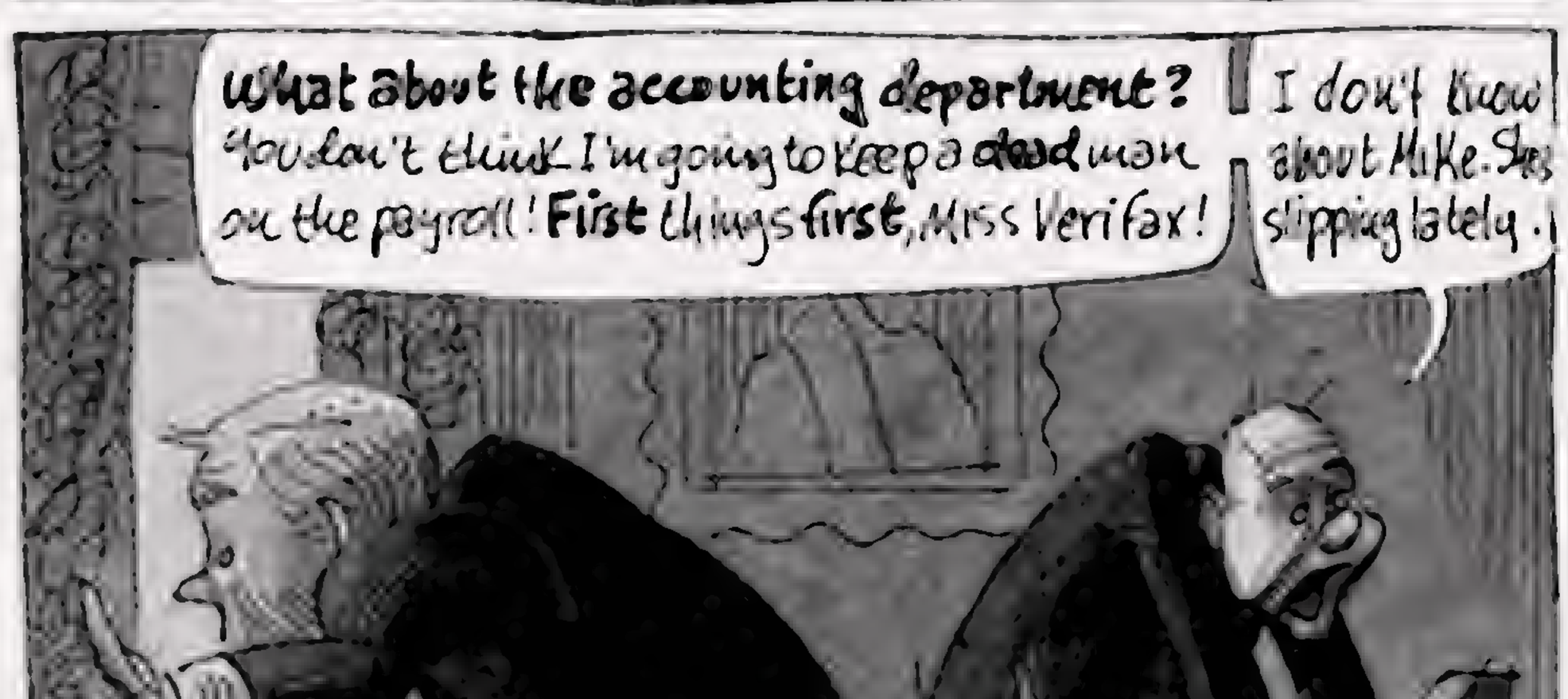
latatya

But wait a minute! I just remember...you've been paid a full week in advance and you know it's customary to give two weeks notice.

Well try and make me! JUST TRY! YAHAHAHA! Goodbye, Shlock! I hope this BURNS YOU UP!

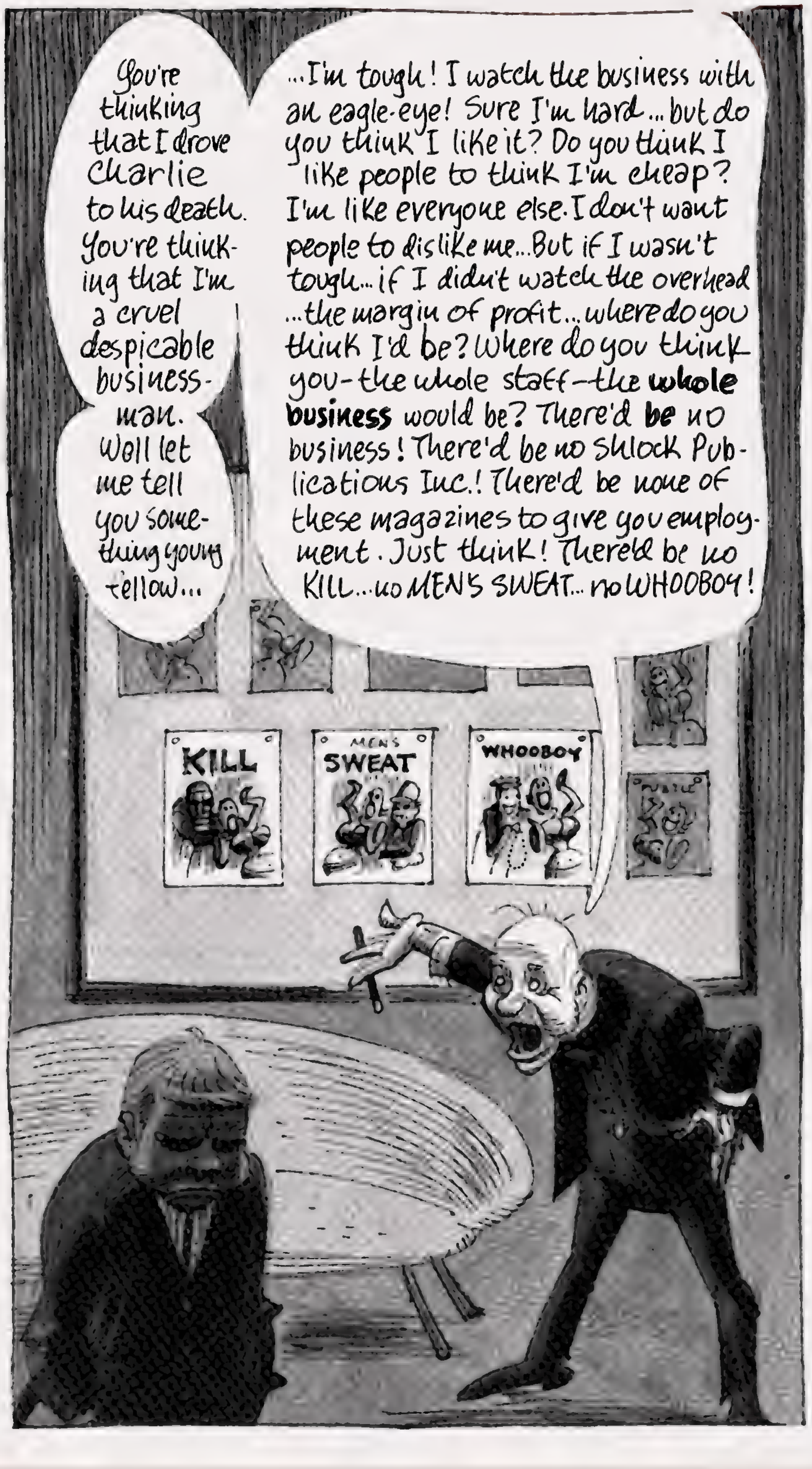

He- He jumped!
I thought he was bluffing!
Miss Verifax! Are you still here? Something terrible has happened. Mr Folith jumped out the window. Notify the proper authorities immediately.


Twenty stories.
Mr. Shlock. I've called the police department and the hospital. Is there anything else?


What about the accounting department? You don't think I'm going to keep a dead man on the payroll! First things first, Miss Verifax!
I don't know about Mike. He's slipping lately.


Well... go ahead. Say it!


I know you hate me, Goodman. I know you think I'm rotten...
I didn't say anything Mister Shlock.
You don't have to. After you've had my experience in life, you get to know what a man is thinking by little subtle things. Little subtle things like a narrowed eye... a curled lip ...spitting on the floor...hitting!
Sure. I know what you're thinking.


You're thinking that I drove Charlie to his death. You're thinking that I'm a cruel despicable business-man. Well let me tell you something young fellow...
...I'm tough! I watch the business with an eagle-eye! Sure I'm hard... but do you think I like it? Do you think I like people to think I'm cheap? I'm like everyone else. I don't want people to dislike me... But if I wasn't tough... if I didn't watch the overhead ...the margin of profit... where do you think I'd be? Where do you think you-the whole staff-the whole business would be? There'd be no business! There'd be no Shlock Publications Inc.! There'd be none of these magazines to give you employment. Just think! There'd be no KILL... no MEN'S SWEAT... no WHOOBOY!
KILL
MEN'S SWEAT
WHOOBOY


And that's why I'm tough...not for me! I have my employees... my family...
I want my kids to be educated- to have all the opportunities I didn't...
And I want the good things for my dear wife who has seen me through all these years...
Yoohoo. Mr Shlock
Am I too early Mr. Shlock?
Er. I'll be through in a minute, Miss Voom.
I can wait, Daddy Kins.
Ahem. Well...it's been a pleasure discussing our views, Beaver. I think every one has left, so would you lock the front door when you go out? Goodnight!
Good night, Mr. Shlock!
We'll have a quiet dinner, baby-kins. I've had a tiring day.

TIME LAPSE


Hi Mike, baby. Is Lucifer in?
Mr. Shlock is in.
..Goodman. Let's talk


Remember when you first came here Goodman, you were full of dreams, ambitious..
Tell me more, gorgeous


Goodman! I'm serious. You've fallen into bad habits. I want to talk to you.
Sure, baby. Sit here on my lap and talk to Poppa.


You wanted to do great things, Goodman... fine magazines. You had **plans** once.
You'll find out I got plans, baby, when I catch you.

And while all the others had only one thing on their minds, you were different. We talked. You could always arouse my interest in art.. music.. politics. Now you're like all the rest. All you want to arouse are my passions.

So Kiss me you fool!

You wanted to see me, Good-man?

Oh, Shlock! I just wanted to tell you I'm leaving Shlock Publications Inc.

What's this?

Yes. I'm going into business on my own

What? What business?

I've got a gimmick that has a very good chance of succeeding.

Gimmick? Gimmick?

It's almost too simple. Actually I'm following your business techniques ...your training. My initial investment is practically nothing. My potential income can be huge. My margin of profit.. **practically 100% NET!**

What is it? What is your gimmick? Tell me. In confidence! This will be strictly off the record, Kiss my pinky to the sky.



Why sure, Lucifer... I'm not keeping it a secret!

As a matter of fact, I brought it with me.

And I'll be glad to show it to you!


He took the whole week's pay-roll!
The whole place... cleared out!
Let's untie these ropes! Has somebody got a hand free?
YEEK! Yes!... Somebody's got a hand free!
Would you ever have expected that of Goodman Beaver?
What got into Beaver?
All the time I thought he had a lousy business head. Now I know different.
Goodman Beaver's gonna be aall right.
END



COMPULSION ON THE RANGE



"THIS ONE'S KIND OF DATED, isn't it? This was the first story I did for the book, and I don't really like it. I hadn't developed the style I was using here; it developed as I went along. Page one looks pretty primitive compared with page one hundred. I don't think I got good until I got through this story.

The watercolor wash is lacking. I don't suppose a regular reader might notice, but I can see it today, even in an old paperback. The wash strokes could have been swifter; the control of the tones is clumsy. A lot of it is too dark. The hard part for me in anything I do is gaining control of what I'm doing. The story doesn't compare with 'Thelonius Violence.' I had control there."

—**HARVEY KURTZMAN**

FROM A 1986 INTERVIEW WITH DAVE SCHREINER

The following
western is an adult one
of course–A gripping tale of
schizophrenia on the sage-brush
and paranoia on the prairie...

COMPULSION

ON THE RANGE




Pre-pare to dah, Mosh'll! Ah'm gon make mop play!
Wait! ... Wait! That movement in my shoulder is no play! I'm just itchy there!
Hurry up, boy... we gotta use this street again. I got another showdown at high-noon, another at 2:00 P.M., and a group showdown at 4:00 P.M...
Ooh! Wait! No play! My elbow is cramped! Just lemme stretch it a little.
Wait! Waitwait! A nervous twitch is moving my pinky!

COMPULSION ON THE RANGE

In the Nebraska territories a man riding herd months on end in the saddle, can get a powerful yearning ta t'ar loose when he gits ta taown.

To put it in plain, every-day talk, neighbors... he develops tensions that can lead to neurosis... or even psychosis, unless an outlet... often as not a violent one... is found for repressed, subconscious emotions.

So did many a cowboy make his peace in the dust of Dodge City's Main Street... where vacant, bullet-riddled-stores at both ends of the street attested to the numerous differences that were settled there.

That's the way it was in Dodge one Sunday morning as irritated citizens, with practiced leaps, tore for cover, while Marshall Matt Dollin faced Johnny Ringding... gunfighter, horse-thief, fastest draw and worst schizoid in the territory.

Of course, Dollin himself, with all his traumatic experiences, was not 100% adjusted **either**... but then again... Who is?


Ringding! Long as I'm Marshall... this town is going to be peaceable with no shooting and no fighting.
Now give me your guns or you're going to get into trouble.
No shooten en no fighten? Yew gone crazy lak, Mosh'll? Yew wan' lose your rating?
Om makin' mopplay!
BLAM BLAM


You'd think he would've knowed better!
You'd think he would've knowed...
...what trouble he could get into...
...for shooting a Marshall.

Way'll Marshall, I always say yew cain't win em every time!

Lester! Get my horse! I'm going after Johnny Ringo!

Matt! You can't leave town!

Why not, Doc? Is my wound serious? Am I dying?

No!...but you got three more appoint ments for showdowns this after-noon!

Yeah! Who'll watch the town if yew go?

I swar, Mister Dollin..I don't know why we're chasing Johnny Ringding. He's own up! You jes **cain't** beat him to the draw!

I'm just a little rusty Lester. A little practice will fix me up.

We been riding so hard, cain't we rest a spell?

Not likely, Lester. There's Indian sign here.

...hear them quail calls a-while back?


Quail? Indian sign? I hain't seed hide nor hair o' an Indian.
Oh... they're there, all right. I've learned to sense their presence.
Bang!


Sounds mighty peaceful and quiet to me, Marshall.
That's just it! It's too quiet. It looks peaceful enough, but they're out there!


...probably been stalking us for some time.


Actually... they're very close by... barely out of sight.


I Know Indiansign. ...When they see their chance, they'll strike.

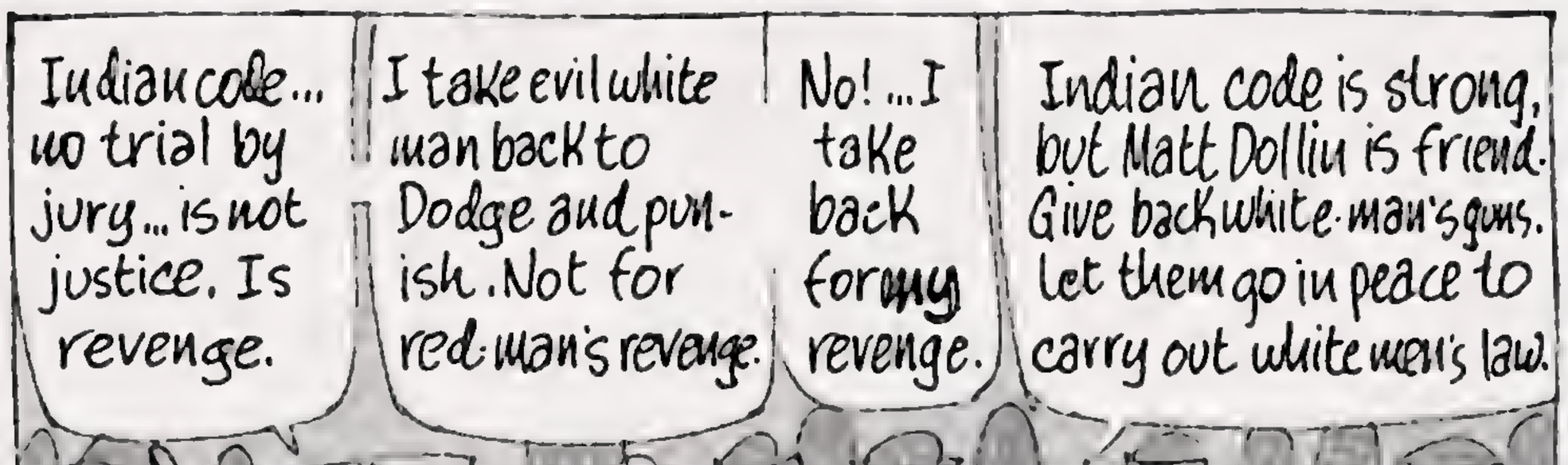

Mister Dolliu... We been two days in the saddle since you saw Indian sign an' we ain't seen an Indian yet...
I guess those quail calls were really quail after all.


I could've sworned I saw Indian sign. And yet, one never Knows. You see, the Indian is very cunning that way... aware, yet silent as a cat, moving on moccasined feet... never betraying his presence by a clumsy mis-step...
Well anyhow... we're out of Indian territory and closer to Johnny Ringding.
Draw
Zip
Bang!
CLOMP CLUMP
Marshall! Look! Indians!


A village! I don't think they see us, they so busy a-clouping and a-stumbling around that ceremonial fire.
lester! We got here just in time. They got Johnny Ringding tied to a stake. They're gonna burn him.


You gone plumb loco, Mister Dollin? Whey-uh yew going?
Lester... long as I'm a U.S. Marshall on U.S. territory... the law of the land... white man's law... must prevail! And knowing right is on my side, I do not fear to walk up to their chief. Besides he's an old friend o'mine.


Marshall Dollin! If you come to save wicked white man who steal Indian horse you are not welcome.
Oh chief, I come to take wicked white man home for white man's justice in name of great white father... for great white justice is better then red justice... Is whiter.


Indian code... no trial by jury... is not justice. Is revenge.
I take evil white man back to Dodge and punish. Not for red-man's revenge.
No! ... I take back for my revenge.
Indian code is strong, but Matt Dollin is friend. Give back white-man's guns. Let them go in peace to carry out white men's law.

Let the white man and the red man live by his own code. ...I will send my daughter to bring the guns.

Let us live in peace... separately, yet side by side. ...Go ahead, honey. Get the guns.

That Kid not my daughter. ...This my daughter.

This your daughter?

...Ahem! D'course there is a school of thought that holds by integration...

Here are guns. As long as the white man honors the Indian code he is free to go in peace.

You see the purtyest Indian gals in these parts— all lipsticked and mascarred.

Nah Mosh'll! I'm leavin'! Ennybody tries to stop me.. this li'l gal gets it!

Brothers! Let the evil white man go lest he harm my daughter. Indian revenge will follow whither he goeth


Johnny Ringding! You have broken the red man's code. If I do not kill you... Indian's revenge will.
Day and night I have practiced the quick draw. Let us have another showdown, O' evil white man.
Will yew quit talkin' lok a redskin, Mosh'll!
Om making mop play!
BLA
BLAM


How'd think he would've Knowed better!
How'd think he would've Knowed...
...Indian revenge would get him...
...even though I didn't.
Well... back to the ol' pistol-practice!

Get me up, Lester! This is a terrible thing Ring-ding has done. I am a-**shamed** for the white-man.

-you mean him taking the girl?

...well...**no!** ..But be-**sides** him beating me to the draw again, I **am** ashamed about the girl

Wait, brothers! Indian has given word to evil one... we not follow **now**. Indian revenge follow by'm' bye!

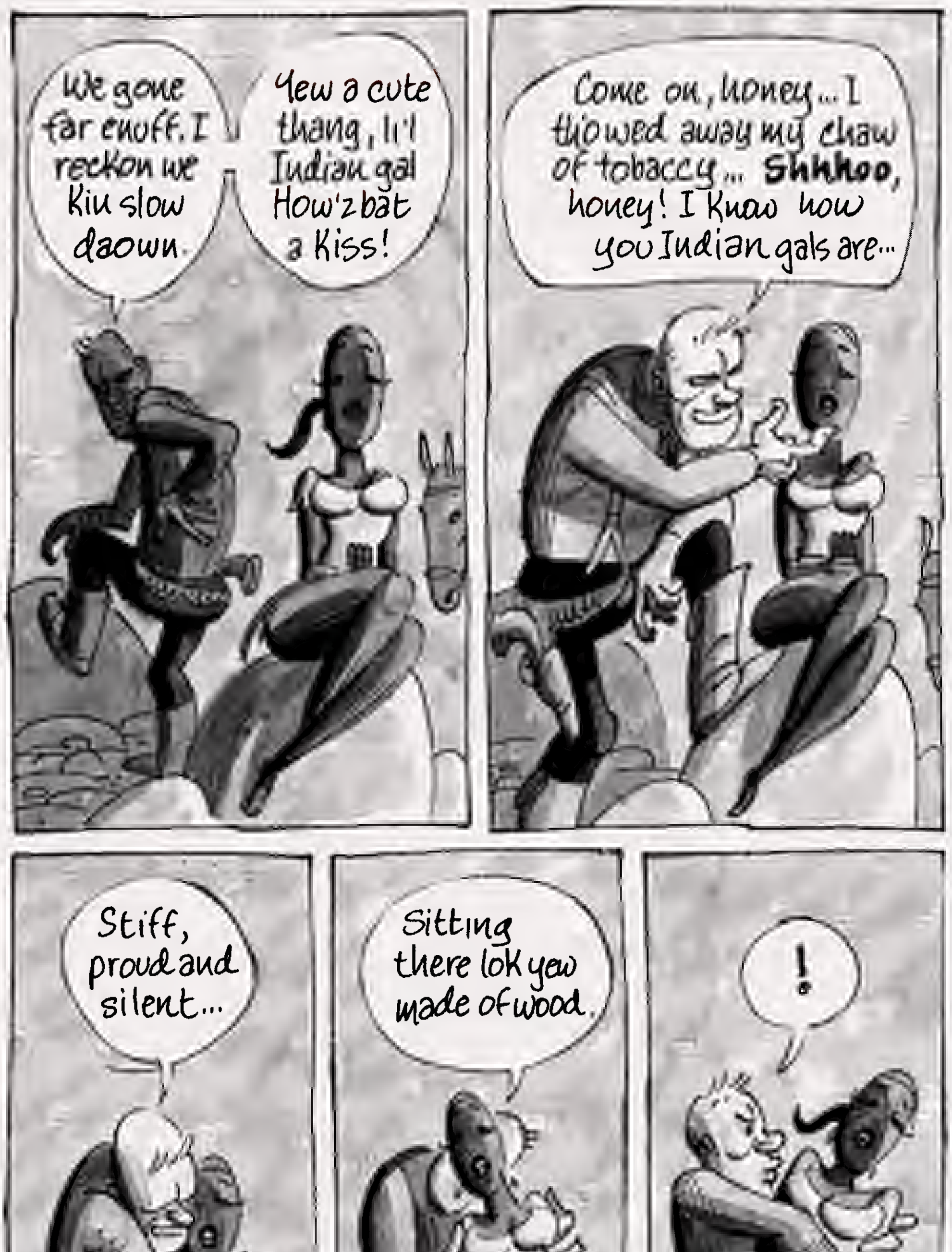
Red-man has given big red pro-mise.

Mar-shall has given little white lie.

The evil one has bro-ken the sacred code. Separately from the white-man, Indian revenge will follow for daring to profane an Indian woman.

No harm shall come to that pretty li'l thing. Justice must come. -and the color line must go... pretty li'l thing:

We go now.


We gone far enuff. I reckon we kin slow daown.
Yew a cute thang, li'l Indian gal How'zbat a kiss!
Come on, honey... I th'owed away my chaw of tobaccy... Shhhoo, honey! I know how you Indian gals are...
Stiff, proud and silent...
Sitting there lok yew made of wood.
!


By dayum... she is made of wood.
Those tobacco leaves... She b'long in a cigar store!
Put up your hands, Ringding!


You've broken the Indian code! You're a fool, Ringding!
You wouldn't talk so tough if you didn't have the drop on me, Mosh'll!
Give him back his gun, Lester.
Let's shoot him first, Mister Dollin-
They'll do it every time, these decadent Amerikaner sivilen- lunt with their sense of fairplay.

Cain't the lil Indian gal help hold you up, Marshall? I'd like to go now...

Ringding! Someday people will realize Indians should have been treated with more respect... that they were the good guys and not the bad guys. Someday, all filters will be recessed.

Yew talk lok a dang Bolsheviki, Bwah! Om making mop play!

Whoo! This lok pitchin two games in a row!

BALAM


Well...
...Here we go...
...again!
Draw? Zip? Bam?
...Where am I going wrong?
Whoo! That crazy Mosh'll. He so full holes... they no more space to shoot him. He wearing me out by perseverance.

Marshall Dollin, this is ridiculous. Here we've tracked Johnny Ringding clear to the west coast... No disrespect, but yew think I'm a Canadian Mounty?

Ringding can't go much further. This must be Los Angeles. I can tell by the Z's defacing all the property everywhere. Let's check with the law-office up ahead.

EL JAIL

You the Marshall here, mister?

Si, senhor. ¿Hwat can I do for you?

Say... I've seen him before, Mister Dollin. Isn't that...

Ye-e-ss... you are the frieud of that colorful hombre ...I think his name is...ah-um.. **Zorro! You are the fat sergeant!**

That was long ago, senhor. The fat sergeant has passed away.

I am Zorro!


One gets old and fat with the passing of time.
I'm Marshall Dollin of Dodge. I'm gunning for a gunfighter called Johnny Ringding. He's here in L.A...
Senhor! Times hov change. We are modern here in loth Hangeleth. There are needed permits for the sward ond the gon.
DAN
And I am wan of those type Marshalleros who does not hwear the pis-stol. Averything I do without the pis-stol, without the violence.
I hwill seek out, by peaceful means your gonfider. Wan can tell the kind every time... The low gon-belt... the mean face... Rest assured, senhor, your troubles are over.


Ah! There he is... the low-down-the mean face -the hunted look. I know the type so well. There is Matt Dollin's gunfider.
So senior Johnny Ringaling - You have come to Loth Han - geleth to escape the Marshall...
My name isn't Johnny Ringaling. It's Seymour Medwick. I make tin-type pictures - cheap.
I'm Johnny Ringading, mista...
You want business with me, yew wear a gun.
Ah, senior... if man lives by the gun, man dies by the gun I have peaceful weapons with which to deal with men.
Fo instance!
... Staring!


You see, senhor... no matter hwat a mon is, he has the conscience...
Will yew git the heck atta yeer?
Git or I'll throw my drink in yew face!
stare
stare
The whis-key in the face will not bo-ther me, senhor.
Who's drinking whiskey? I'm drinking hot soup!
Now will yew go git a gun?
A stare will strike much deeper then a gun. Wherever you go, you will find me staring at you.
Whatever you do, you will find me staring at you.
Whatever I do?
stare
Now will yew go awn git a gun!

Fight back!

Don't take that from them Zorro!

Yew better go git a gun, law man...CAUSE if yew don', ahm gon Kill yew ennyhak!

¿You are nervous, señor? ¿My staring is hurting your couscience? I need no gon. I am at peace. It is **you** who are suffering. It is **you** who live by violence and **you** who will die.

Give eet to them!

Wish! Wishwish!!

Fo'cryin' at loud! GIT OFF MY BACK!

He done shot el Marshallero!

Mark my words, Senior Ringding...you who live by violence are doomed! Perhaps you will not die by the sword or by the rope... but remember! There is always OLD AGE!

Shhoo! I cain't shoot them. Mosk'ills fas' enuff. I gone git outta yar!


Ain't no life in the U.S. for a gunfighter! Let's face it! I ain't hit it big here! Some gunfighters are worshipped... Masterson... Earp... The others gotta sit aroun' all day like me, hearing "They's always one faster! They's always one faster!"
Shh-OO!
I ain't shaped up so I'm gonna ship out! Gonna sign on on a clipper-ship goin' round the world!
Just a minute ling-ling-ling!
...Sigh.
...making mop play Mosh'll.

If I told him once, I told him a thousand times. You jes can't beat Johnny Ringding to the draw. It's a miracle I even got him back to Dodge Will he live, Doc?

Oh he'll pull through in time for the next chapter, Lester.

Now will everybody step outside? I'd like to have a talk with Matt...personal like.

Get me up! Lester... Doc... I must beat Johnny Ring ding to the draw... I must practice...

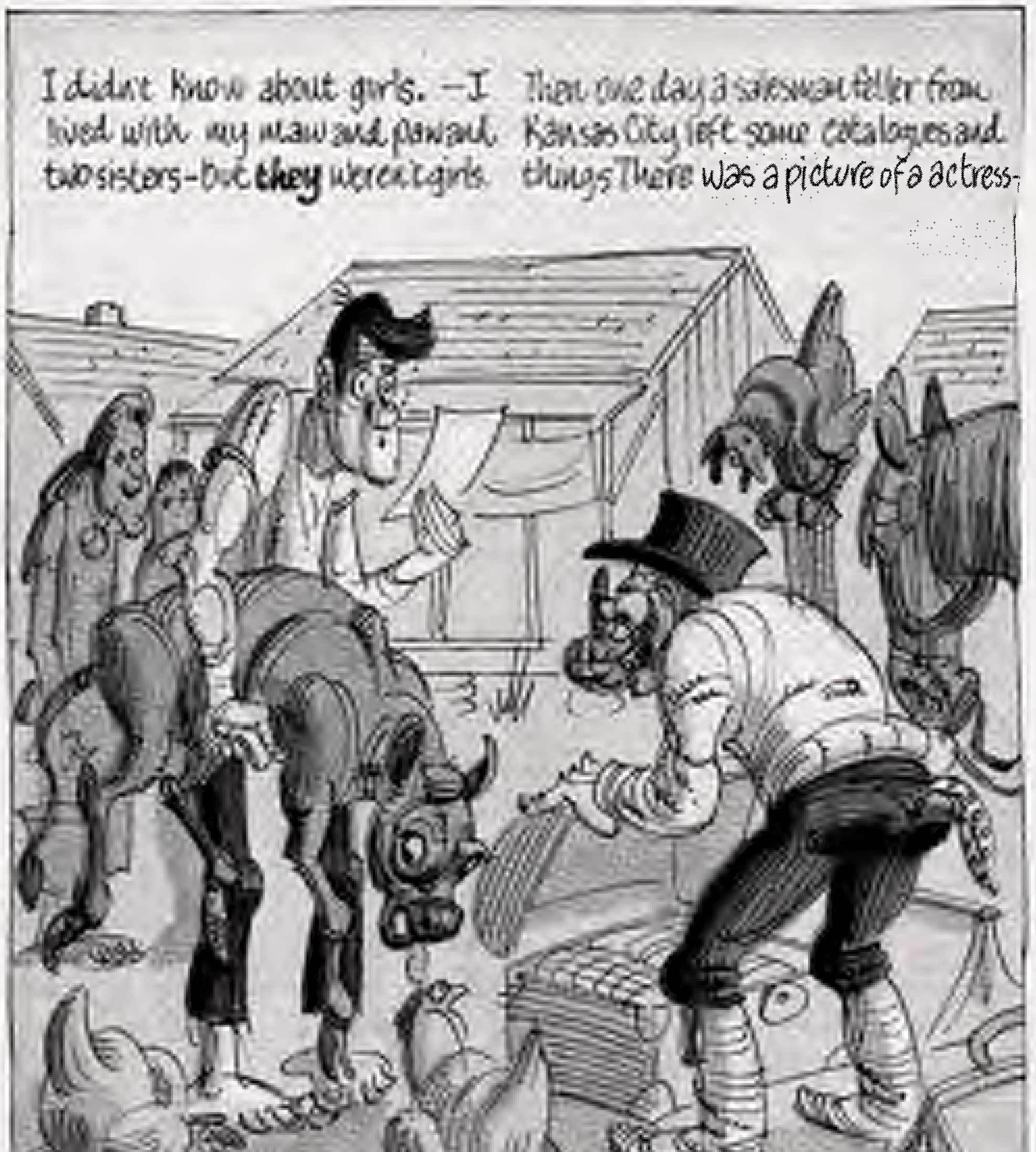
Matt! A doctor.. a Western doctor has got to keep up with the times and trends. Now there's a young feller I hear tell of in Vienna, name of Sigmund Freud.... You been acting mighty queer. Why don't you tell me anything that comes to mind.

..Top ten!

Forty li'l Indians!

Say Doc... did I ever tell you 'bout my childhood?


It all started when I was a tiny six-and-a-half foot kid...
We lived on a farm and I didn't know much about the outside world... about modern conveniences... like wheels... or fire...


I didn't know about girls. — I lived with my maw and paw and two sisters — but they were a girls.
Then one day a salesman feller from Kansas City left some catalogues and things. There was a picture of a actress —

She was dressed in a costume ...well I'm not Neddy Dingo - I couldn't get over that costume. You never saw nothing in the world like it!

What it was that got me was the costume had an actual nickel-plate pistol strapped right there on the side - a five shot Armyidesson!

'Course I was ashamed for anyone to know I had it, so I hid the picture with my toad collection in a special drawer we duz used.

Then one day I happened to hear paw askin' maw about an ol' seed catalogue he'd once had and put away somewheres.

Then he seemed to remember
He'd left it **in my special drawer!**
and he started off to get it!
I was supposed to be sleepin in the top

...so I couldn't very well sing out.
If paw found my picture, I'd
catch it good. **I had to get to**
that draw first! ...I jump up!

I run around the back!
I've got to beat him to
the drawer! I'VE GOT
TO BEAT HIM TO THE
DRAWER!

Of
course,
I
never
did.

Naturalust,
Matt. Dere is
der dude trubie
Frustration! Then
compulsion!

You see, Matt... this experience has never left you. Take this compulsion to have showdowns with Johnny Ringding. Even though you knew you couldn't win, you had this compulsion to beat him to the draw. Why? Because Johnny Ringding is the father image. In a sense, you have been **still trying to beat your father to the draw.** ... $5.00 please.

By gosh Doc, you're right! I feel better already... like I've gotten something disagreeable out of my system.

You have! I took six bullets out of your system.

Jesse Diñgo ... long as I'm Marshall, this town is going to be peacable... with no shootin' and no fightin'.

Now give me your guns or you're going to get into trouble.

You don't scare me none, Marshall. I think I can beat your draw.

I'm making my play!

Hey, Marshall... I thought you uvz through with show-downs on Main Street.

Oh I am! I am! I'm adjusted now.

I said I'm making my play!

I never fool with this silly show-down business. I just walk casually over to trouble makers...

Why don't you get ready for play-making, Marshall?

Then when they least expect it, I give them the thumb in the eye... the knee in the stomach...

who cares about beating to the draw!

Speak about fastest draws... did they ever get Johnny Ringding?

Naah! I thought Indian revenge would at least get him!... **BUNK!** He sailed away to the far-east, thousands of miles away.


MEANWHILE: the far east... thousands of miles away -
what has the infidel sailor done?
He has been caught branding and selling sacred cows.
Here in India, there can be only one course of action.
And what is that?
What else?
Indian revenge!
end



DECADENCE DEGENERATED



"THIS STORY IS MY MEMORY of Paris, Texas. It was my inspiration. I was stationed there during World War II. It seems like a lot of towns in the South have two streets, Commercial and Main, which cross in the town's center. There's usually a statue of a Confederate soldier on a horse to mark the spot.

I understand that today, Paris, Texas, is considerably larger than it was when I was there. Back then, it looked like Rottenville. The story was not plotted along any lines; I just wanted a parody of that town. I worked from memory.

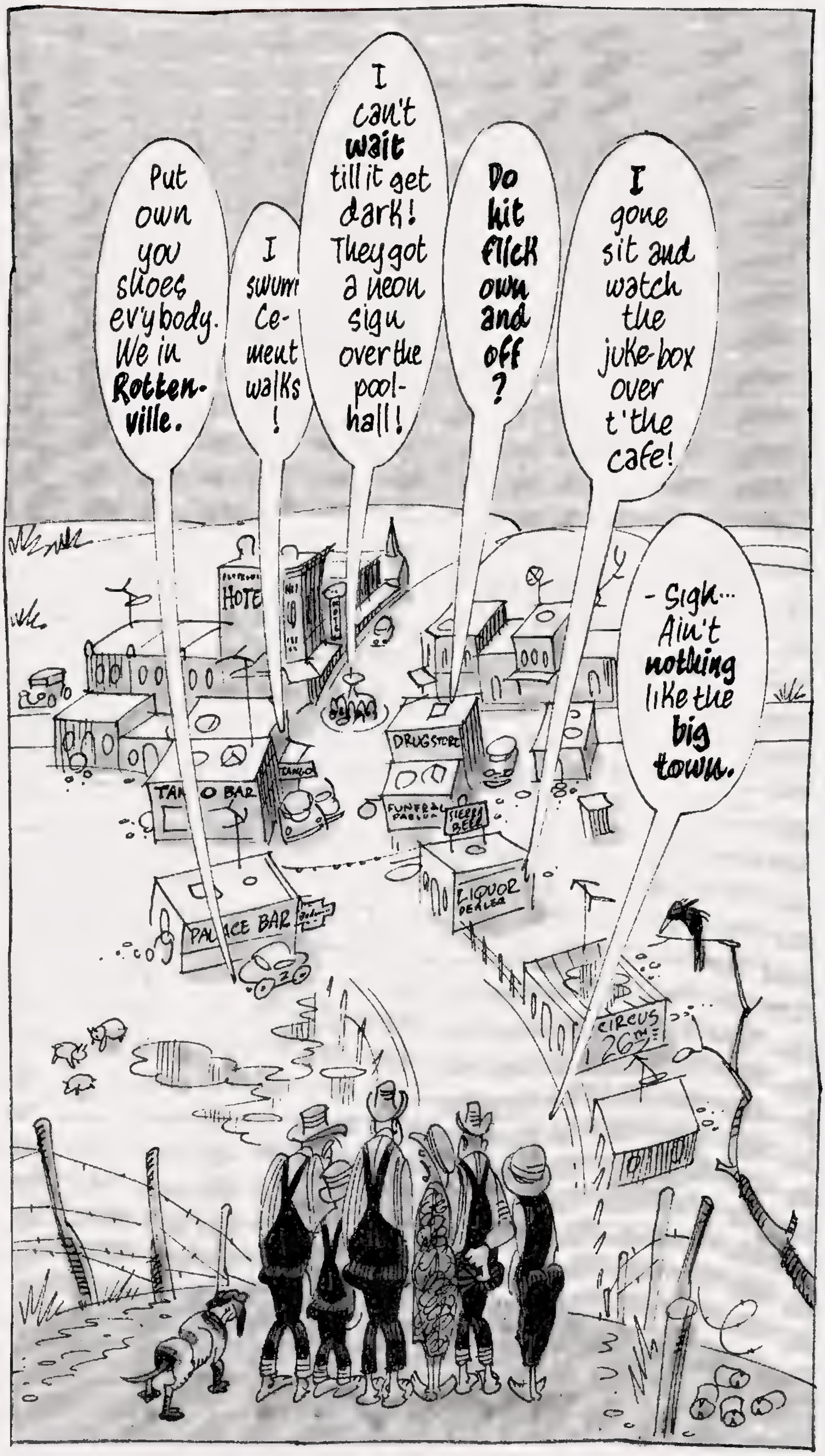
My closest interaction with the townsfolk back then were at USO dances. I didn't study the dialect or anything, but I've always had a good ear of sorts. I'm good at sound effects too. I'd have to say this is one of my two favorite stories in the book."

—**HARVEY KURTZMAN**

FROM A 1986 INTERVIEW WITH DAVE SCHREINER

This story
is in 3-D... D-cay
D-terioration and D-generacy
It is a very inneresting story
poynently tol by the method.

DECADENCE DEGENERATED


Put own you shoes ev'ybody. We in Rotten-ville.
I swum Ce-ment walks!
I can't wait till it get dark! They got a neon sign over the pool-hall!
Do hit flick own and off?
I gone sit and watch the juke-box over t'the cafe!
- Sigh... Ain't nothing like the big town.
HOTEL
DRUGSTORE
TAMPICO
TAMPICO BAR
FUNERAL PARLOR
TIVOLI BELL
PALACE BAR
LIQUOR DEALER
CIRCUS 126TH

DECADENCE DEGENERATED

This will not be a pleasant story or a story for weak stomachs. It will be a story about a lynch-mob. 'Why then', you ask, 'are you telling it?' And we answer- for **this** reason... the reason so many lynch-mob stories are told and have to be told today.

And this is the reason.

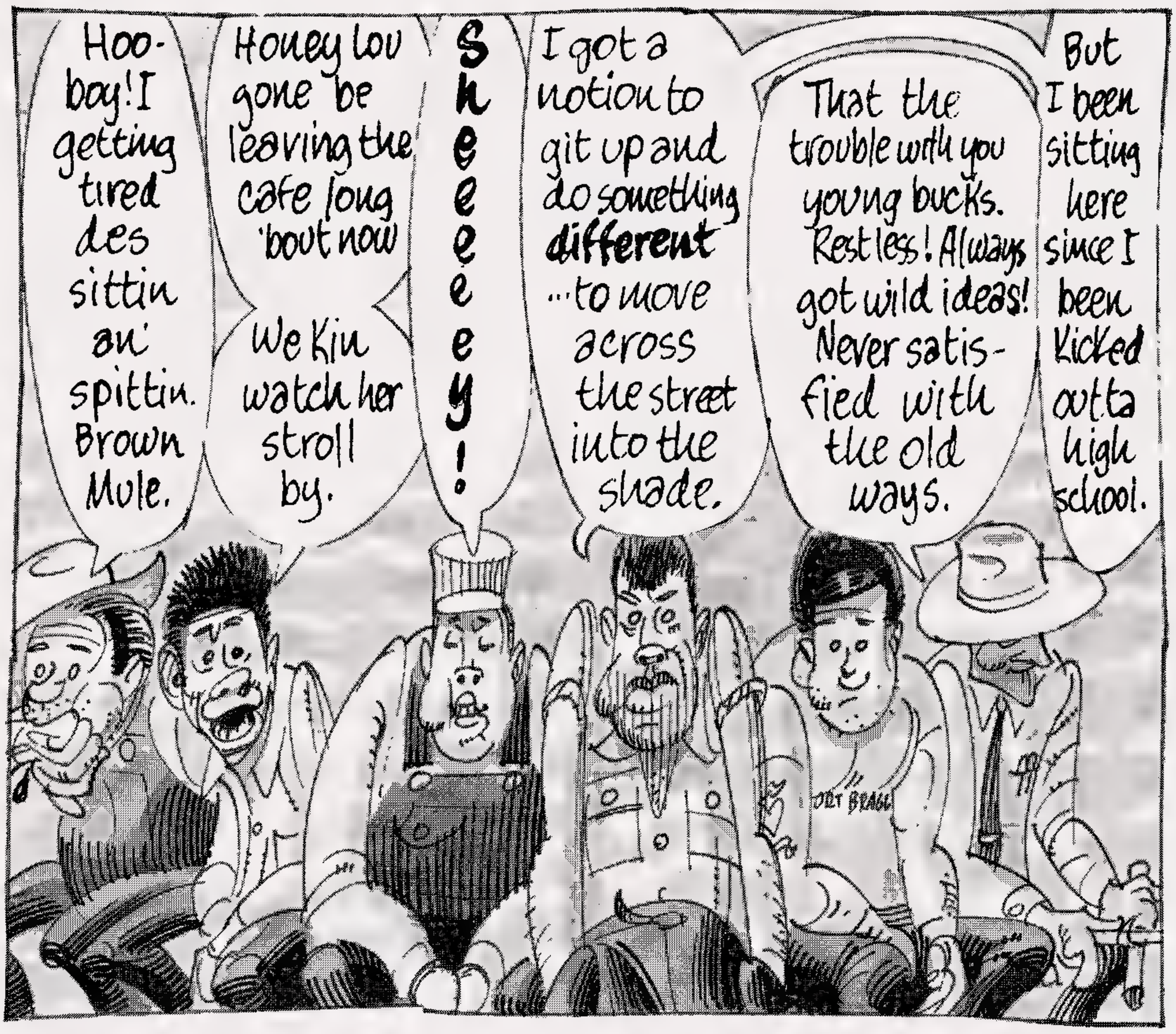
Lynch-mob stories are very entertaining. There's nothing like a lynch-mob story...

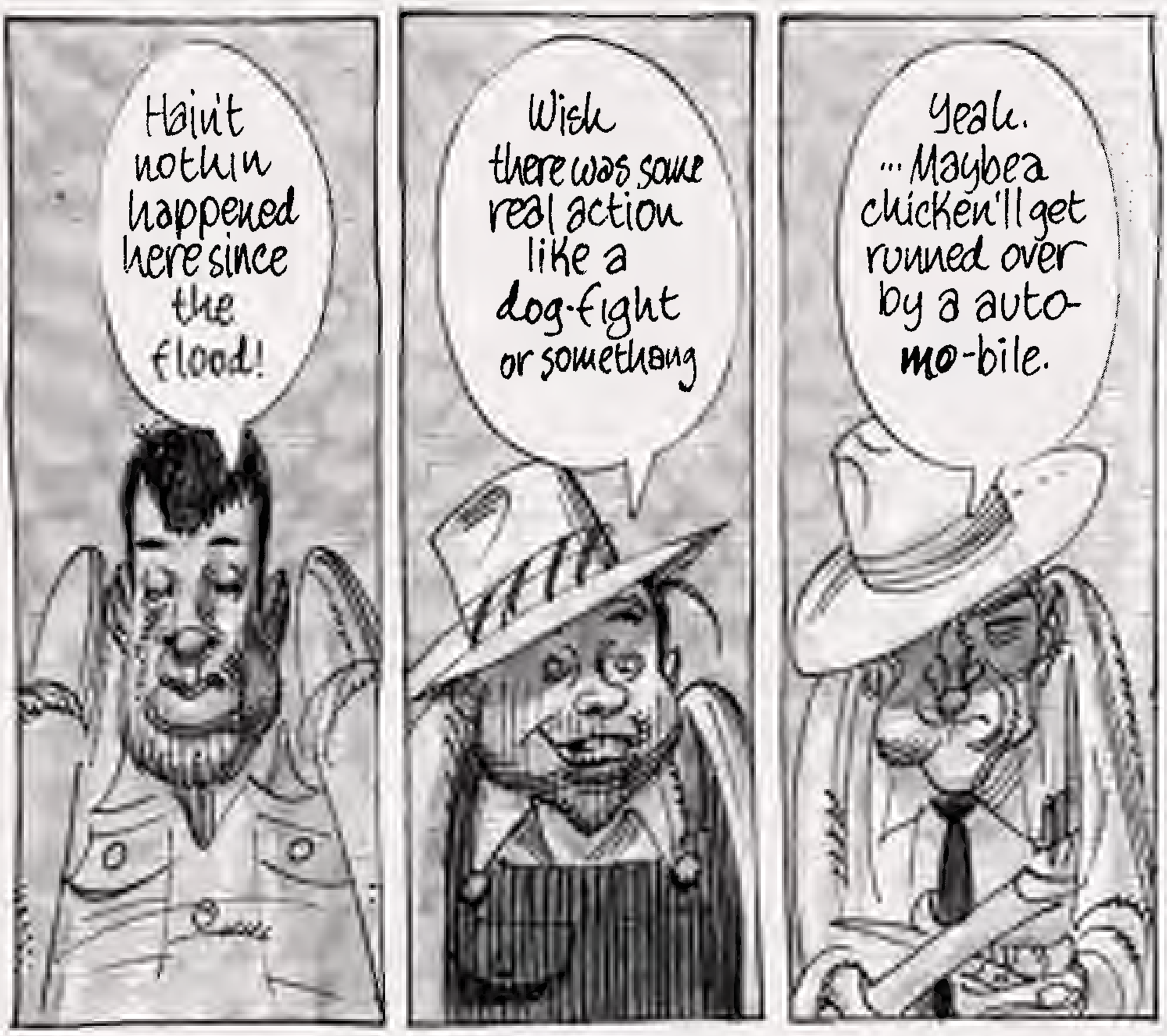
-next to the real thing.

Our story takes place in the warm-climated part of the country, naturally... in a country town of a very degenerate type - where there's a treeless square with a waterless fountain towards the center of Main street... or is it the main part of Center street ... where a handful of trouble-makers are always standing on the corner, watching all the girls go by... standing degenerating in the sun.

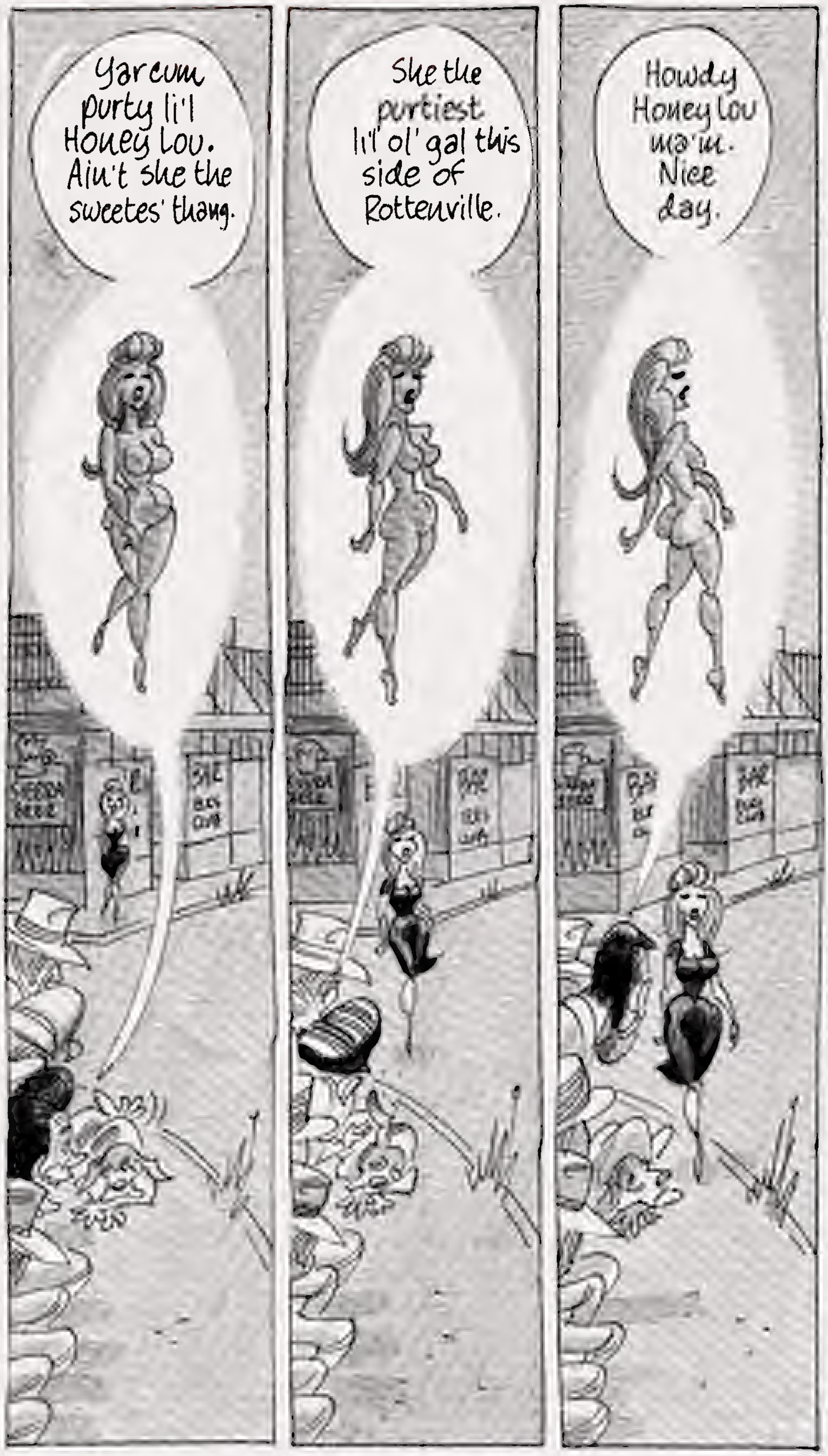
That's the way it was in Rotteville one Saturday afternoon, when Rotteville's citizens reached depths of degeneration never before degenerated to as you shall see on the following degenerate pages...

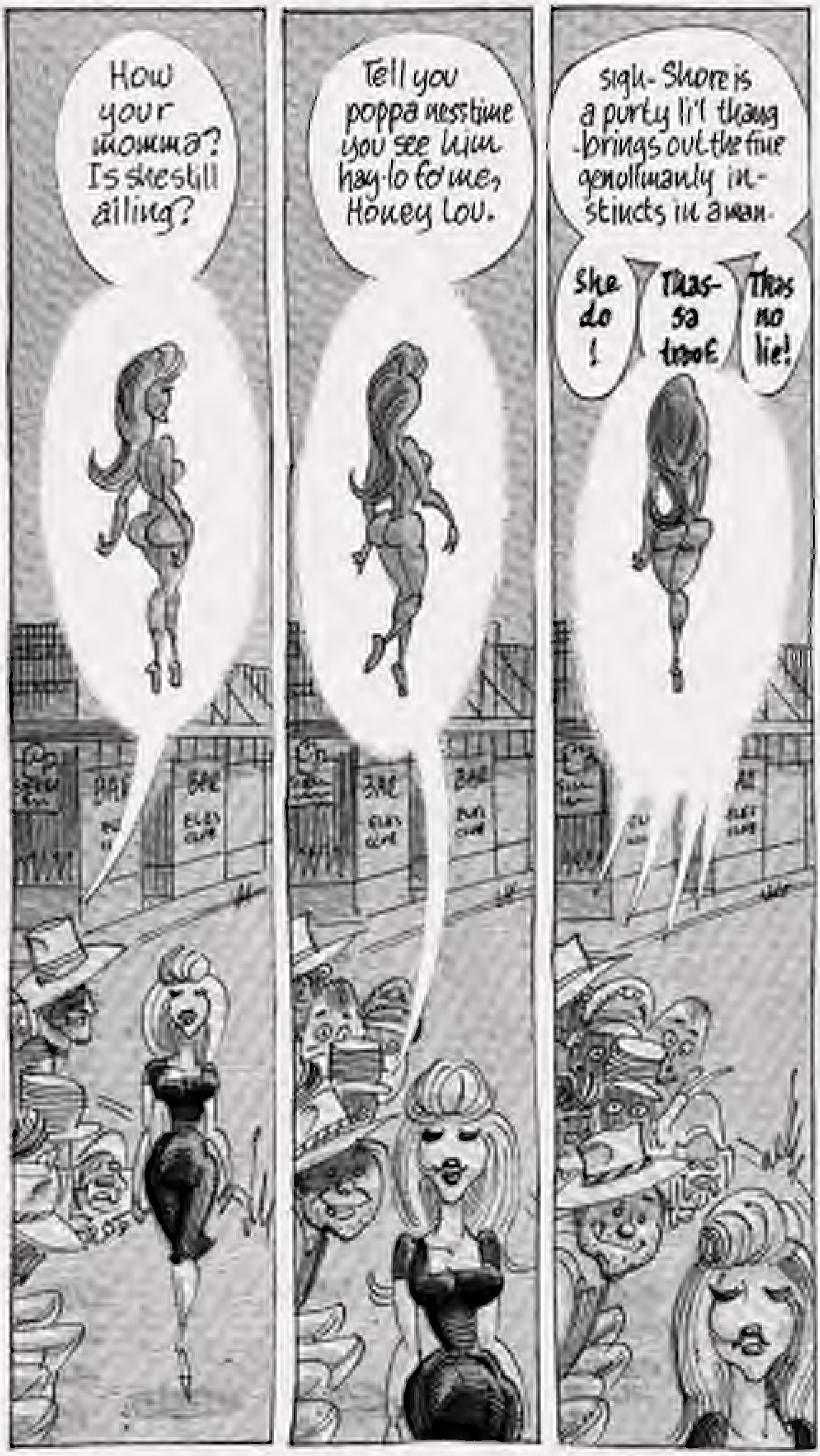

ROTTENVILLE HOTEL
HOTEL
ROOMS BATH
COPPER
HOTEL
Squt! Splat!
Squt! Squt! Thud!
Splat!
Budweiser
BAR
BUDWA BEER
ICE CREAM
SODA CANDY


Hoo-boy! I getting tired des sittin an' spittin. Brown Mule.
Honey lou gone be leaving the cafe long 'bout now
We kin watch her stroll by.
Sheeey!
I got a notion to git up and do something different ...to move across the street into the shade.
That the trouble with you young bucks. Restless! Always got wild ideas! Never satisfied with the old ways.
But I been sitting here since I been kicked outta high school.


Haint nothin happened here since the flood!
Wish there was some real action like a dog-fight or something
Yeah. ... Maybe a chicken'll get runned over by a auto-mo-bile.


Or maybe we kin hit somebody!
Maybe we kin hit each other!
Auw- same old thang as yester-day.
Lookky yonder! Yer she cum.
FORT BRAGG


Yarcum purty li'l Honey Lou. Ain't she the sweetes' thang.
She the purtiest li'l ol' gal this side of Rottenville.
Howdy Honey Lou ma'm. Nice day.


How your momma? Is she still ailing?
Tell you poppa nes' time you see him hay-lo fo me, Honey Lou.
sigh- Shore is a purty li'l thang -brings out the fine gen'lmanly in- stincts in a man.
She do!
Thas- sa true
Thas no lie!
BAR
BAR
BAR
BAR
BAR
BAR


Whut's goin on yere? Ennybody yere getting fesh withmy sisser? Ennybody insolting my Honey Loo?
Sst! Loog-out! It Sam!
Ain' nobody talks fesh to Sam's sisser!
Don't pay to get Sam hed
You told of Sam?
I ain' said a mo' word.


Lucky for me Sam a woman.
Haylo, Sam.
Howdy, Sam.
I'm spised at you, Sam. We may cuss an' spit an raise a little hayl...but whey women is concerned we gennulmen!
Ennybody talk fesh to my sisser, on on Knock him on his haid!
Ha-ial!

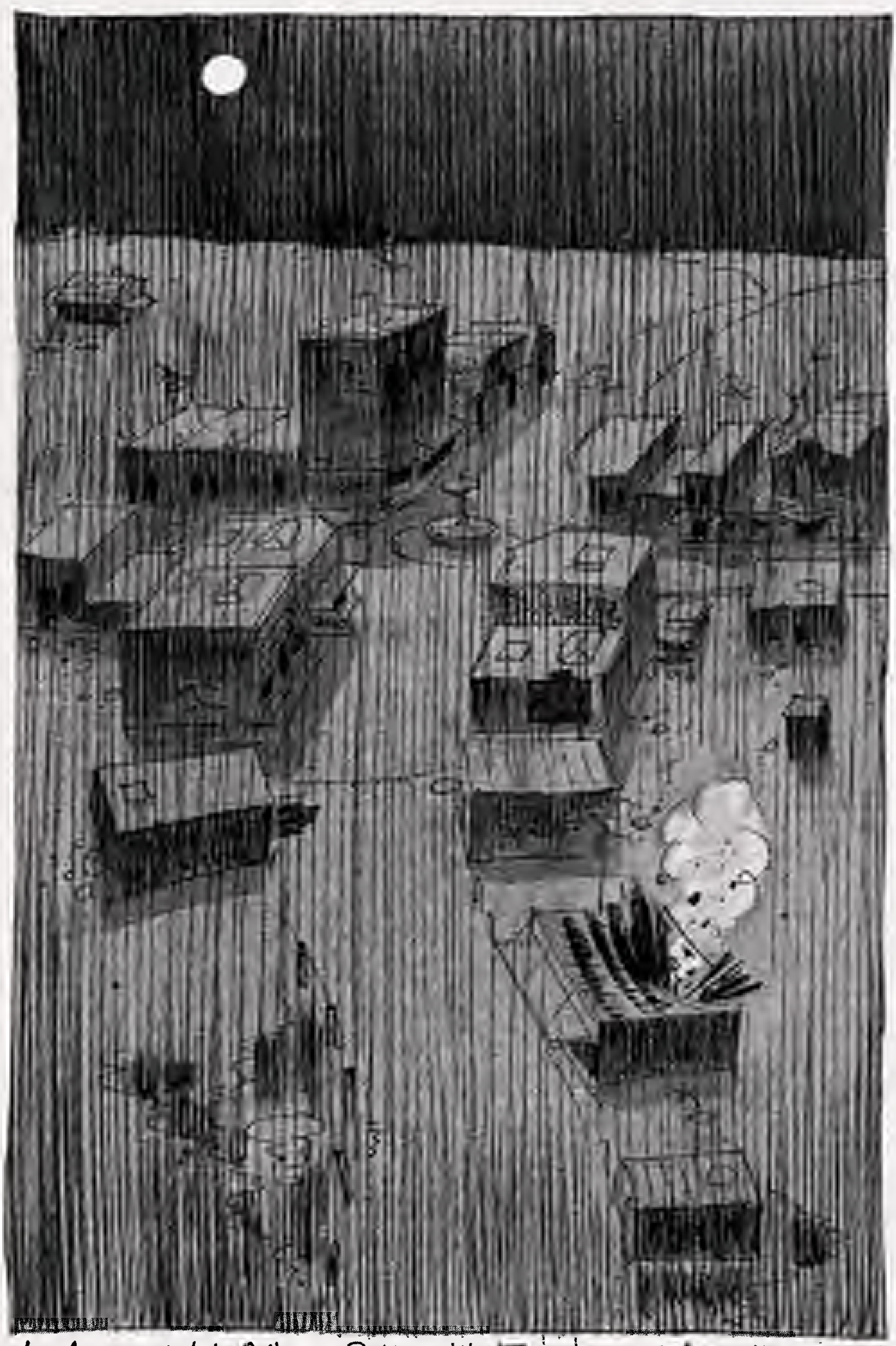

We may not be much but we got honor. We got trä-dition. We never f'esh to ova women.
Thas. sa troof !
Thass no lie !
looky boys, yar cum Si Med-nick.
What he hold-ing?
I seen one of them ouce't in Fayet-ville. It called a book I think.
yeehs
HOTEL
DRUGS
WE FILL PRESCRIPTIONS
SIERRA BEER


Dayum smart alec. One thang I don' lak ez a man who reads
You cain not truss a man who reads!
Thass no lie!
An I happen to know Si Med-nick takes baths!
She y
Whut he tryin' to be so diffunt for?
He a trebble maker sure enuff.
Whut he do all alone in his shack?
She ey!
Looky, Sam. He gone talk to Honey lov!
Sam. I wouldn' let one o' those trebble mak-ers shine up to my sister.
You wouldn' want your sister to marry one o' them, Sam.


Ain' no trebble-maker gone mess 'round with my sweet innocent child sisser.
Here you Honey Lou! You got to git on home nah!
But Sam... I gone to walk a ways with Si. Si say he got a pezzent for me.
A pezzent? Why that @*%@ son of a %%#*@. I'll teach him to @@*!! with his @@** pezzents!
You take your @@*x pezzents an' %%%* them on the @@@ of the **%@#@
You does doan know baht me, Honey Lou lissen to you older sisser. Take my example. I'll teach you to be a lady!


You Know a man don't like a gal who is too free an easy an' he's any man buy her a p'ezzent. You got to learn a few things ef you wone to be att'active to a man.
You right. I ain' gone let him braug me a pezzent. I gone go over to Pete's an Pete it!
Well — sigh there go Honey Lov.
S u e e y !
Nothin' else big gone happen today. Might's well call it ay day.
LIQUOR
GUNS


I sure am tarred of setting yar. I thank I gone go home an rest.
The trebble is we need a little group activity. May be tomorrow we'll meet at the ball-park. They a good place there. We kin shoot craps.
Suppose I brang a deck for 7 card stud.
There you go! Always flingin' your education in our faces.



And so, night falls on Rottenville. The blast of the juke box and the clatter of the pin-ball machine are stilled. One by one, the lights blink out except for the bulb over the bus-stop. A steam engine wails far away in the dark. A dog barks. A roof quietly caves in. ...Rottenville sleeps. Hot, degenerate night shrouds the town...the countryside...and **murder.**


My ain't that a purty sunrise. Des lookit the mists rising from the fields... All the critters of nature are beginning to stir and leave their nests...
Makes a body all mushy inside.
Makes a body feel like Killing all them critters.


Come on, dog. Less find a rabbit.
Poppa he proud when when I bring back a rabbit


That the way of nature. That the law of nature.
Woop! There go a coon!
Got 'im!


Without hunting, mayn does not eat.
There go a bird!
Got 'im!
-wish some body'd eat the rabbits I bring home.
There goa chip-munk!
Got 'im!
Anykow I can always keep the paws for lucky rabbit feets
There go my dawg!
Got 'im.


Only trebble I got the whole closet full-up with stinking rabbit's feet.
Whey in the heck all the rabbits today?
Sometime they hide in the ravine by the creek.
WHAT THAT ?


A body! A dead body in the ravine!
Ugh.
Ugh.
I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF DEATH.
I BETTER GO GET THE PO-LICE CHIEF!
Woop! There go a squirrel!
Got im!
...and as for your slot machine you can take this protection money and git on out of my office 'fore I Knock you in the mouth!
Well then I give in chief. I'll pay more like you want.
Chief Beefarooni Chief Beefarooni!
Oh it hobble! It hobble!


She over there. It awful! It tebble! It hobble!
There there now.. simmer down, son 'fore I knock your cheap!
I think it Honey lou! She layin' in the ravine! OH I CAN'T STAND THE SIGHT OF DEATH!
Whop! There go a rab bit!
Murder? In Cotton-ville? How tebble!
WAIT TILL I TELL THE BOYS!


Si Medluck! He was flirtin' with Honey lou last evening!
Throw him in jail for murder!


Hol' on man.. We ain' got no evi-dence
Throw him in jail for spi-cion of mur-der!


Well what we do spi-cious?
WELL THEN DES PLAIN TH'OW HIM IN JAIL!
He so queer!


Speak of the devil and his imps will appear. There Si Mednick NAH!
ARRES' HIM, CHIEF!
Nah stayn aside
Chief Beefer-man you hadn't ought to do that.
Stayn aside, I say. I know law-man's business. When you wanna take a mayn in, you gotta ack fass!
You hadn't ought to do that, Chief Beefer-man
I know my bos-iness! You gotta s'pise him so he too shocked to reziss arress!
But that not him.
There Si Mednick.

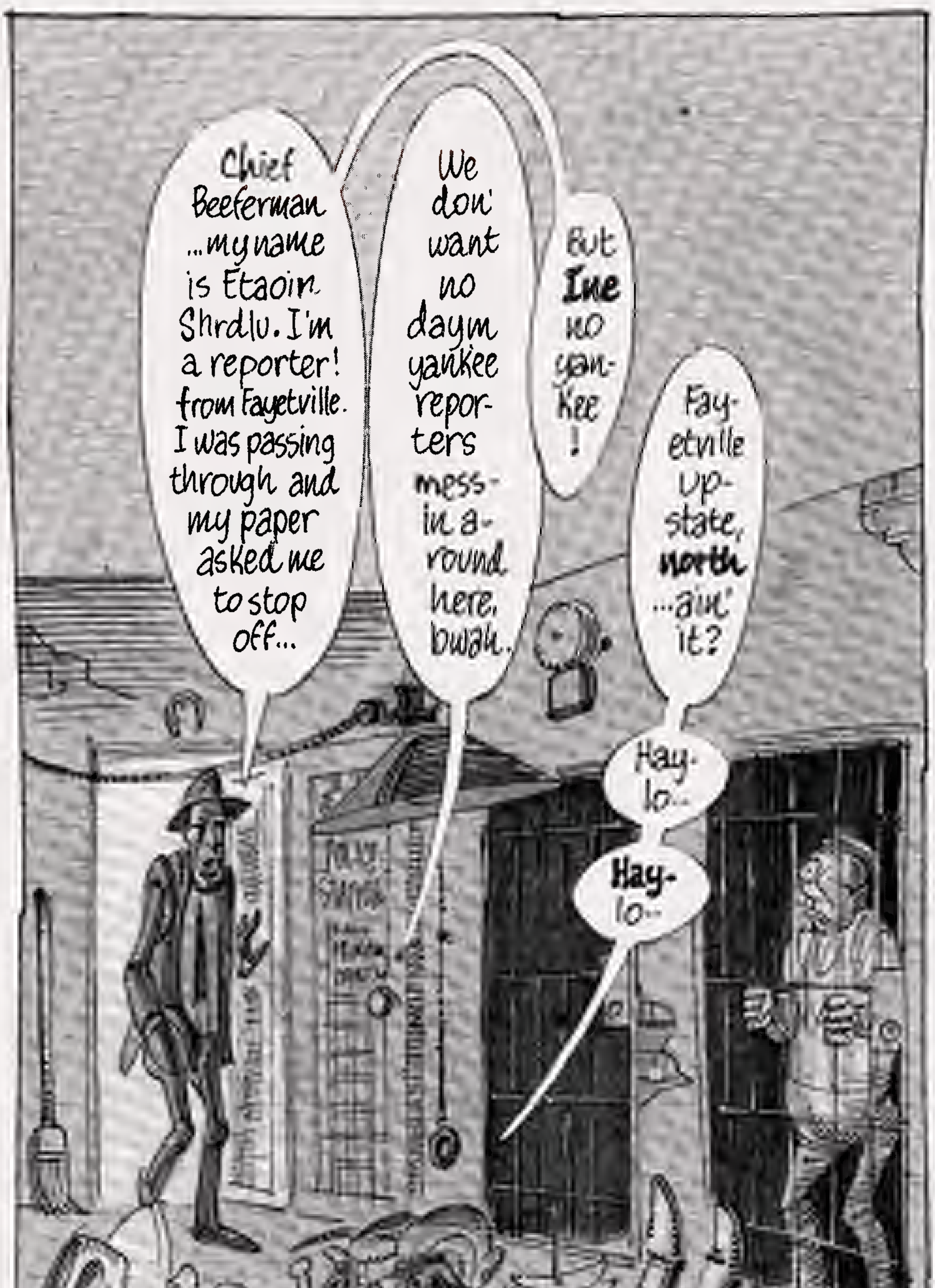

That the truth. For a real, fine dramatic show, you des caint beat that Mickey Mouse
Here come Dab-ney own the run!
May-be he'll trip an' fole awn his head!
So Lak E was sayin this show in Fayet-ville had the bes' dayum acting
Tebble news! Tebble news! They been A MUR-DER!
Spit! Spit!
Spit!
Spit!


It a shock, I know- such a tebble thang
I reckoned y'all would react pur- ty bayd...
Well-ain' you gone say some- thang 'bout this tebble thang?
HOT DANG!
That more lak it!
Murder! How awful! How awful! Give us all the details! Don't leave out the good parts!
How tebble! Pinch me! someone! It lak a dream come true!
Sheeey!
And to think I almost left for a nap.


Imag-ine-a Mur der.
Ain't nobody gone get away with murder in Rottenville!
He gone get what coming to him.
That's no lie!
He gone get it good!
She ley.


His Kind should be strung up high!
He should be whipped half-dead first, then strung up.
His Kind should be burned at the stake!
BUT WITH TORTURE FIRST!
She ley.
Wait a minute! Wait a minute!


WHO?
Well we don' Know!
I swear, if you ain't the worst party-pooper, Leroy!
HOTEL
PLACE PIGALLE


Chief Beeferman ...my name is Etaoin Shrdlu. I'm a reporter! from Fayetville. I was passing through and my paper asked me to stop off...
We don' want no daym yankee reporters mess-in a-round here, bwah..
But Ine no yan-kee!
Fay-etville up-state, north ...ain' it?
Hay-lo...
Hay-lo...


About this prisoner you're holding for murder...
Hay-lo Miss Breckenridge..This you chief of po-lice calling. Ine soliciting contributions for the po-lice retirement fund-
I am very busy with po-lice work, young man.


--By the way Miss Breckenridge ...everything OKat the still?
—Nah how much you say I kin put you dawn for?
But chief... there's a mob forming outside
Nah listen, young feller, I got more'n enough work for a body! calls to make--


Then I got to go out and man the speed traps_give out tickets...
But chief... time is of the essence-
Well, des hol' on till I finish some vital business-
Hay-lo--Miss Floyd? This you chief of po-lice calling. Ine so-liciting...

Mednick... they say you killed Honey-Lou Voomney. I want to find out the truth for my paper... I'm a reporter.

A reporter from the Sentinel, eh? Aaah, you're just like the rest. A lot you care about justice. You're just in it for what you can get!

Oh you're **wrong**- You're **dead wrong** Mednick. - you see .. I'm not from the Sentinel. I'm from the Globe

You saw Honey Lou last, Mednick — Look me in the eye and tell me... **did you do it?**

Why how could I do such a thing?

I've never killed anything in my life!

I DIDN'T DO IT!

I DIDN'T DO IT!

I DIDN'T DO IT!

I DIDN'T DO IT!

I didn't do it!

I didn't...

I didn't-

Yes... the expression in your face... your eyes... deep down inside I know it... I feel it...

You're guilty.

Hey... you're not supposed to say that. I saw the way it's supposed to be once in a moving-picture. You're not supposed to talk like that!

Chief Beeferman! I've got to get the whole story of what happened here. Not conjecture but **FACTS!** And you know why I've got to get the whole story. In your innermost conscience, you know why... Yes you do...

Yeah Yeah! In the int'ests of law an order an jussiss an' lak that.

Why no... If I don't get the story I'll get **fired**! My paper doesn't employ me for **hand**outs, you know.

Now we've got to work fast before that mob outside gets out of hand. I'll go and round up some facts if you'll get on the phone and call in your deputies

Ve'y well... I'll call up dep-uties Twiggs, Pike, and Kershaw-

Hay-lo Twiggs. Thiz Chief Beefer-man call-ing.

Hey Chief! Brang out the prison-er!

Ine solicit-ing contri-butions for the po-lice fund.

That a mighty ugly crowd of a-rouse citizens aut there.

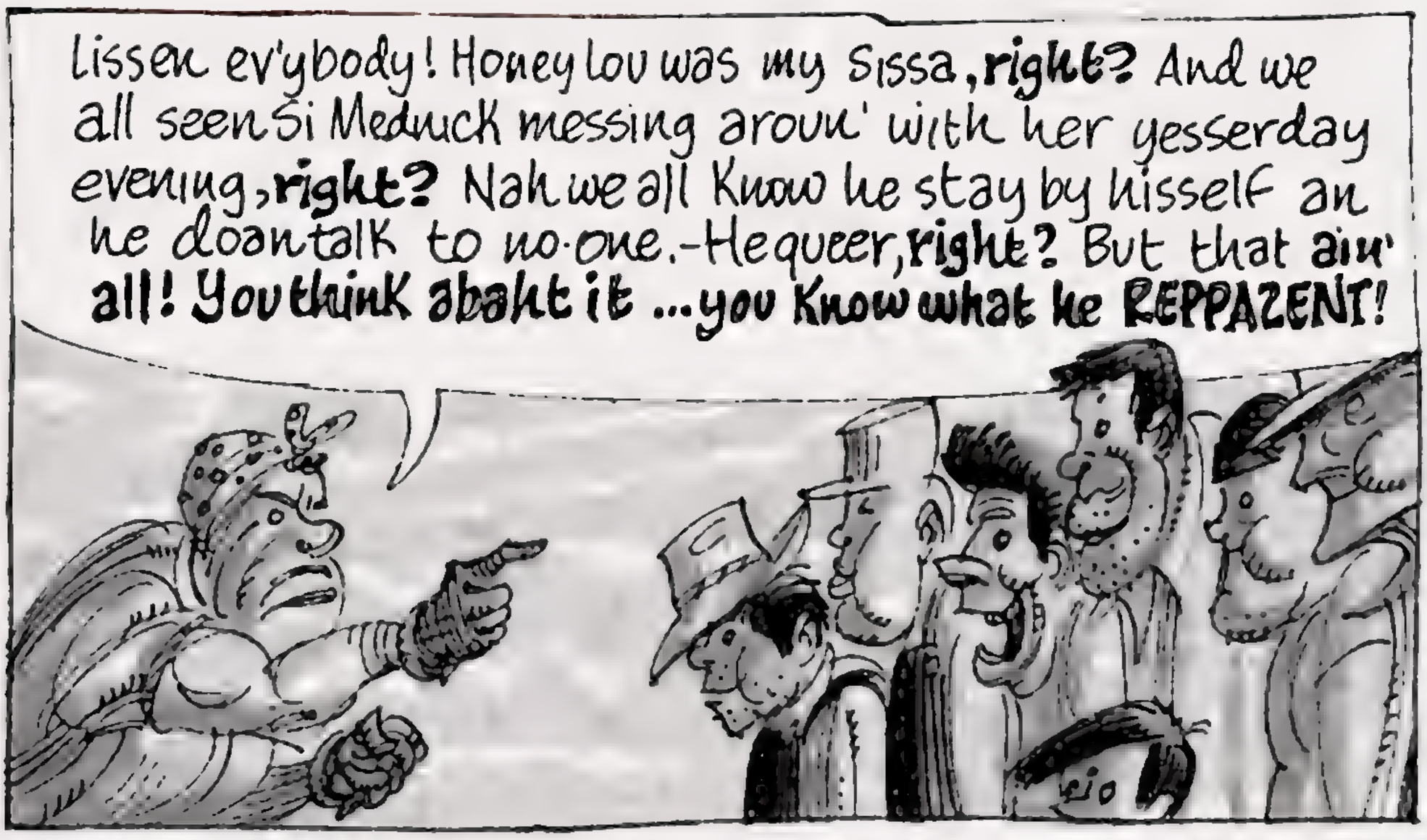
I'm going. You hold them off...In every land-at one time or another, the citizens band together and rise up... some times for good-others, for evil. The patriot bands of yesterday can be the lynch mob of today.

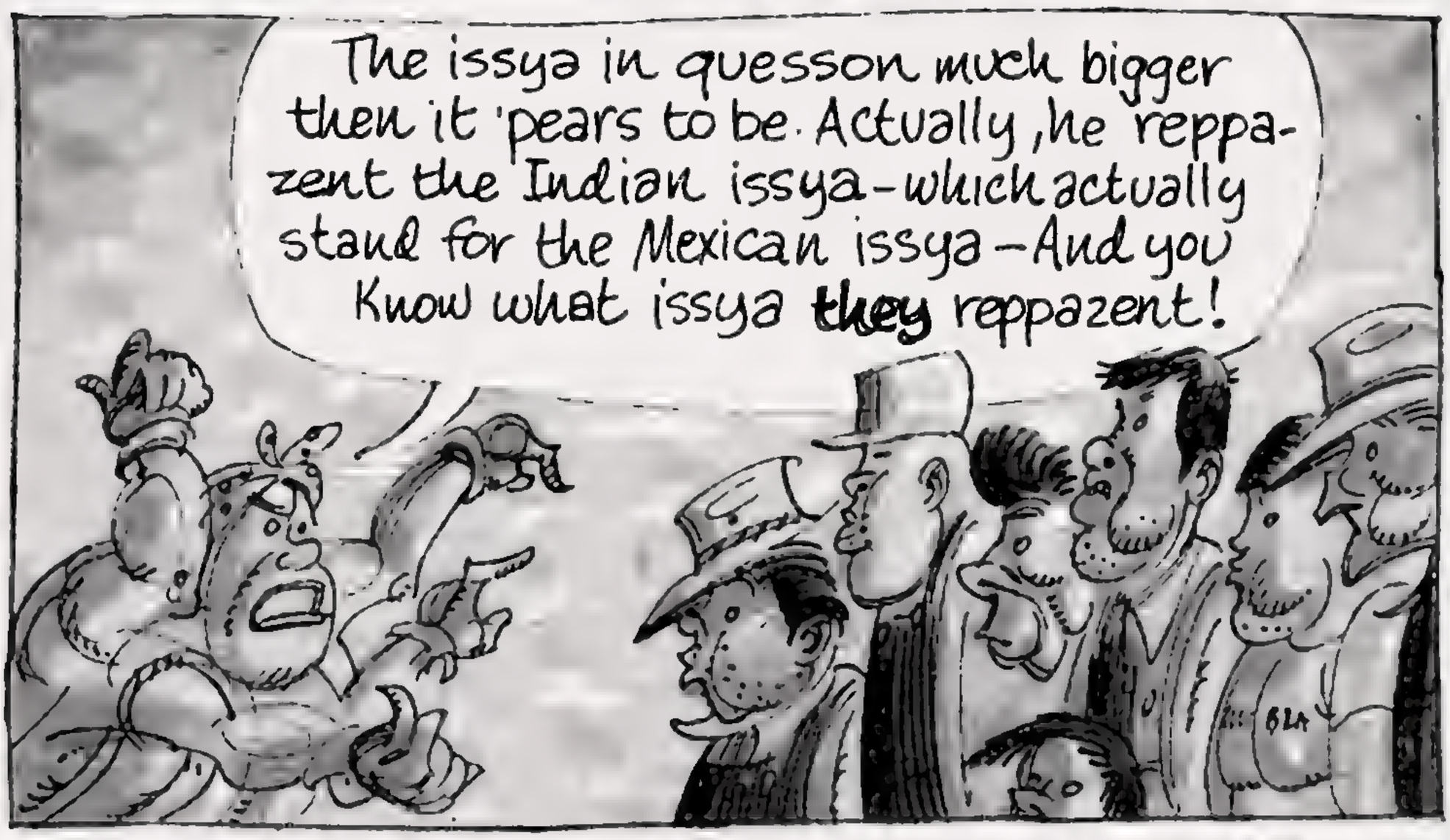
It a good thang they all **non-voting** citizens and can't put me out of office.

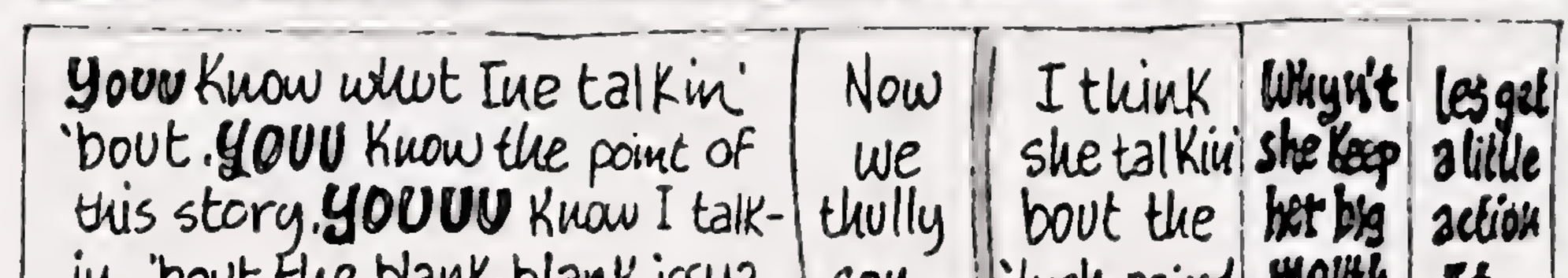
On gone go out an' **Knock em on** their teen-age **citizen heads-**


Nah, folks, less simmer daown. This town is run by due process of law and trial by jury a mayn is innocent till p'ooven guilty and ev'y citizen has the right of habeas corpus...
WHUT THE HAYUL HE TALK-IN' ABAHT?
GIT THAT FOOL OUTTA HERE!
WHUT LAN-GUAGE HE TALK-IN?
WHUT A CLOWN!


I say. less get that murderin' polecat an' kill 'im!
HE QUEER!
WEE HA!
THASS PLAIN TALK!
SHEEY!


Lissen ev'ybody! Honeylou was my Sissa, right? And we all seen Si Meduck messing arouu' with her yesserday evening, right? Nah we all Knoo he stay by hisself an he doantalk to no-one.-Hequeer, right? But that ain' all! You think abaht it ...you Know what he REPPAZENT!


The issya in quesson much bigger then it 'pears to be. Actually, he 'reppa-zent the Indian issya-which actually stand for the Mexican issya-And you Know what issya they reppazent!


Youu Know wut Iue talkin' 'bout. YOUU Know the point of this story. YOUUU Know I talk-in 'bout the blank-blank issya YOUUUUUU Know...
Now we thully con-fused!
I think she talkin' bout the 'high-priced spread'.
Why'n't she keep her big mouth shut!
les get a little action It late!



Night falls on Rottenville as it has for a century. Only tonight the lights stay lit...the racket of the juke box and pin-ball machine is undiminished and an electric tension grips the town. It's nothing you can touch or point out...you just feel the difference. And somehow you know—tonight Rottenville isn't the same.


Cock-a doodle doo ?
Pull over, bwah.
Chief Beefermah! AM I GLAD TO SEE YOU!
AAAAHHHHHHHHH
I've been racing through the night to find you. I've just been to Fayetville and I've dug up some facts you'll want to know.
I sure do want to Know facts. First fact... din' you see that stop-sign 'hind the bush?


I have evidence Honey Lou was in Fayetville last night with her friend Sugar Mae, here... and a couple of sailors.
Still it doan mean we forget about law and order in Rottenville. Jest. pull aside the bush yonder. You'll see a stop-sign big as life.
Not only that but around about midnight, Honeylou was picked up and taken home by sister Sam. Do you know what that MEANS?
It mean you get a traffic violation, bwah.
But what about Mednick? What about the mob?
Oh that They strung him up las' night.



Lynched.

Mr. Beeferman...Go ask the towns-people to assemble at Si Mednick's shack. I want to show them what a really tragic mistake they made.

It true. It true It a tebble shack.

Lemme stand here & mi-nit !

I see another au-to approach-ing my speed trap.

Here they are, Mr. Sheriff. This putty much. everybody

Well... I suppose the police-chief has told you that you hung an innocent man - and I suppose you're thinking you're ashamed and sorry.

Thass no lie. That what we think-ing.

Well - you haven't heard the whole story. I'll tell you why I asked you to come here to Si Mednick's shack.


Look inside here. You all hated Si Mednick because he kept to himself because he was different! You thought he was queer, so you hated him.
Well... the reason he kept to himself was he was shy. He was afraid of you. As a matter of fact he wanted you all to be his friends very badly. -look!
Working alone here in his shack, he made beautiful things... wood carvings, furniture... cuckoo clocks. Not only that, he was carving a set of clocks for you. That was the present he wanted to give Honey Lou.
Oh my.
Ain't they purty.
-with our names carved right on 'em!


Now Sugar Mae, here, testifies that sister Sam picked up Mary Lou in Fayetville at midnight. Well... since sister Sam hid this fact, and since Honey Lou was killed by a knock on the head from a powerful fist... with a little intelligence and logic - anybody can put one and one together and figure out who the killer was.
Sugar Mae?
No! It was sister Sam!
It true! It true! I didn' mean to do it - but I loved my sisser, little Houey Lou! It cut me deep to see the way she run arounc all hours... so I tried to pound some sense into her cause I just didn' want to see her get hurt by meyn. I jus couldn' stand to see her hurt so I killed her.


I hope you all realize what this means. Not only did you make a terrible mistake... but worse than that... you ignored the most fundamental rules of justice. I hope that you realize, by this tragedy, what law and order means.
We do. Oh we do!


It means we should've lynched Sam instead!
SOMEONE GIT A ROPE!
HOT dawg! another lynching!
& HE'S FREE?!

Well Chief ... I'm leaving Rottenville. I hope you'll be able to face the publicity and the inquiry that will follow, and I trust this has all been a dramatic lesson on tolerance

It has sure nough. Now go own git goin' you dayum yankee reporter 'fore I punch you in the head.

Meddling outsiders. Why don' they tend they own back yard.

Wayll you got to admit, Chief, what happened to Si Melick makes a body think.

... Makes you want to be more tolable to other living creatures.

Thass no lie!

DAYUM HOUN' DAWG! ALLUS UNDERFOOT!

While we was saying tebble thangs behind his back, Si had nothing but love for us. All the time we thought he queer.. hiding up there in his shack-he sitting up nights carving clocks for ev'ybody. —They right purty clocks too. I got mine home-des lak yours, with my name own it an ev'ything. looky. It got carvings...

Listen -I do believe it strik- ing the hour.

And looky down yere. It look lak a house with little doors you cayn open -an looky inside...

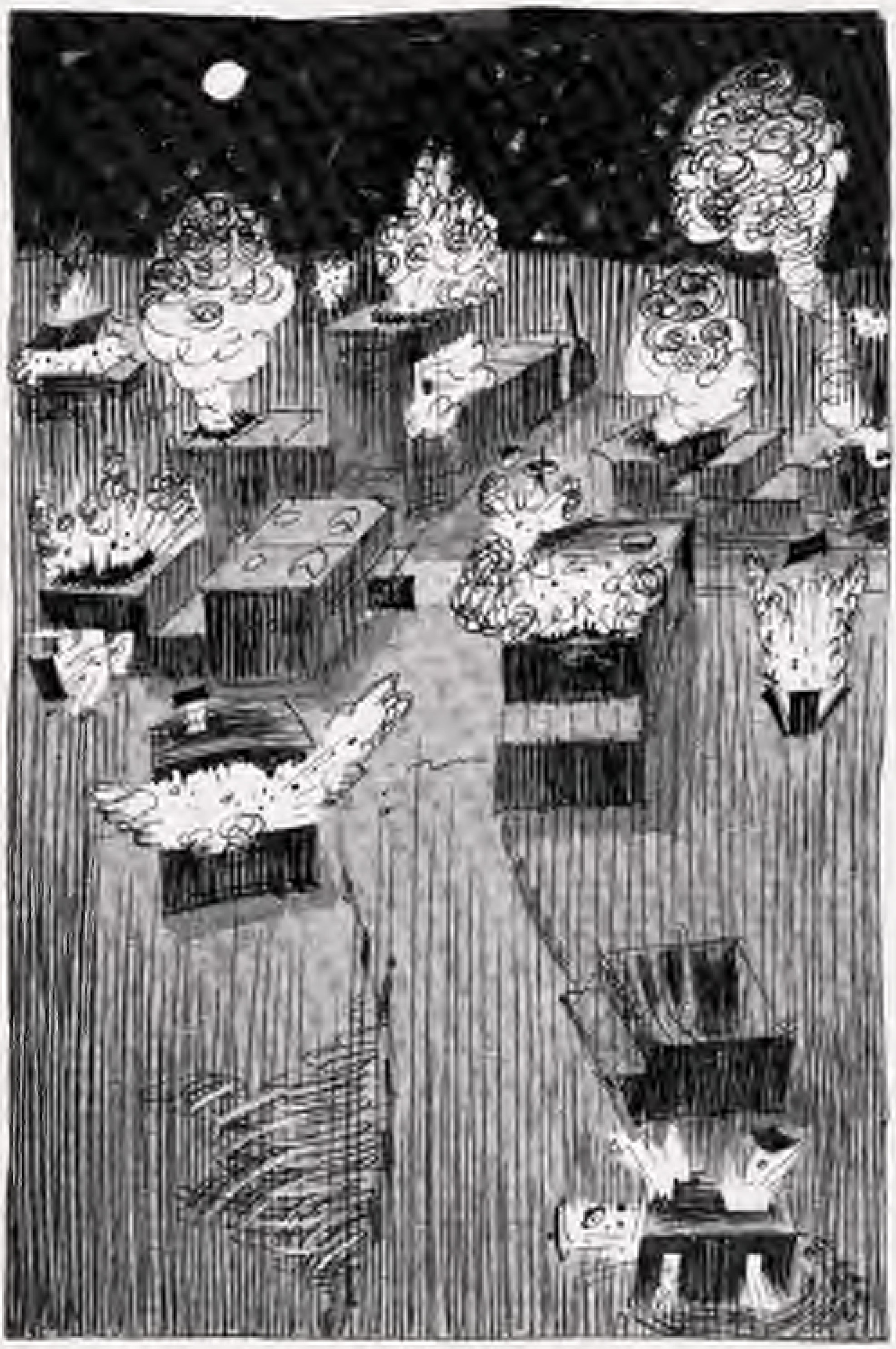
Ding Ding Ding Ding

It look like there more thangs inside.

It look like...

...dynamite-

Ding Ding



And so-night falls in Pottenville. A steam-engine wails far away in the dark. A dog barks, and clocks blow up. Hot degenerate night shrouds the town and the countryside and

the end






EPILOGUE

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN

PETER POPLASKI AND R. CRUMB

MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE, a pair of American underground cartoonists and self-described Kurtzman fans sat down to discuss their current thoughts on *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*—fifty-five years after its publication:

R. CRUMB: So Pete, what's your honest opinion of the *Jungle Book* by Kurtzman?

PETER POPLASKI: Well, I always thought *Jungle Book* was a funny, well-drawn collection of satiric stories jabbing at media and television, and I find rereading it a pleasure. I always find inspiration in Kurtzman's work.

CRUMB: Yeah, so do I, but, I dunno. I was surprised when I re-read it recently, that I didn't think it was all that funny, not like his earlier *MAD* and *Humbug* work.

POPLASKI: Well, one's perceptions change with age and when you go back and look at any work of art after an interval of several years, you have different reactions to deeper levels of the work that you hadn't seen before. I don't think when you say the *Jungle Book* isn't funny, that it's necessarily a negative statement. Kurtzman went for laughs, but beyond that was his compulsion to tell the truth behind the warm fuzzy surface of our favorite TV shows, comic characters and the like, to pull it out of our juvenile little hands and show us in his wacky way that it was just a banal, ridiculous commercial contrivance.

Media is a form of manipulation, using entertainment to communicate subliminal messages. Harvey seems to be one of the few guys in the comics medium of the Fifties who was keenly alert to this, who deeply sensed this.

Harvey's work can make you laugh and it can make you think. He isn't being mean-spirited, he is just being his own truthful self and sharing his personal vision in a cheap paperback book format that is all Harvey Kurtzman, 100%, and no one else. He was always sort of ahead of his time.

CRUMB: Yeah, well I love Kurtzman's art and all, but I thought the publishing story "Organization Man" was weak and the *Gunsmoke* thing didn't work very well . . . There were some funny bits in the Peter Gunn satire but the best story in my opinion is "Decadence Degenerated." I laughed out loud! I thought that was by far the best story in the book.

I just get the feeling that Harvey was suffering from a crisis of confidence. He had left *MAD*; *Trump* was canned by Hugh Hefner after only two issues; *Humbug* was a total commercial failure. And then where did he go? To Hefner's *Playboy* and Jim Warren's *Help!* magazine, both of which imposed limitations on him. He had moments, of course, but working for these guys tied him down with heavy-handed editing and lame commercial formats. What a shame!

As we have talked about on several occasions, there seems to be a seven-year creative phase to the careers of great cartoonists where they are inspired, and then they decline into a burn-out phase, and have to start repeating themselves to maintain their audience. The work becomes less interesting, a stale caricature of the earlier, energetic period. You see this over and over. Cartoonists are ground down by the relentless demands of the medium. Few escape this fate, though with us fine artiste-cartoonists it's not quite as brutal, so maybe our creative energy can have a chance to revive itself periodically. I dunno . . . Maybe . . .

POPLASKI: Hey, pal, like ***VA VOODLE-DE BLAH DA RAAAAN***, man! I dig this book because if you read it out loud, ***VA BLAH-DA DE-DOOOOO***, man, what a gas. OH yesss. It's like . . . radio, dude, ***SKIDDELY BOOTEN DOOOOO***, know whadda mean?

CRUMB: Yeah! You crack me up when you read "Thelonius Violence" out loud. It really does sound like a radio show or some kind of movie soundtrack.

POPLASKI: I like to do that with Harvey's writing and Will Eisner's work too. They grew up heavily influenced by radio adventure shows and movies, and I guess they just absorbed it as they developed their creative styles. They knew how to work with sound effects and put it in with their visuals. It became part of their shtick. In this case, a comic strip imitating a Fifties modern jazz riff really works as a wacky structure to set a detective story in. I also like the fact that the whole book was done with gray washes over the ink line art to further imitate the small screen that television was in the 1950s.

In rereading the "Compulsion on the Range" adult western story I was surprised to get this period overview portrait and feeling of the America Scene then as portrayed by Marshall Matt Dollin; that the USA was the marshall of the world after WWII and couldn't handle Johnny Ringding (Korea, Vietnam and the like). I perceive that in it. I noticed that Kurtzman combines the "adult" Western with a kid's adventure fantasy show, using the popular Disney Zorro character with little difference between the two. My whole family watched the "adult" Western and *Zorro*. I was only six years old at the time. The funny thing is that you can show all the violence you want on TV, but you absolutely cannot show a naked woman. A naked girl is what makes anything "adult." So for me, it was funny that the marshall was hung up

about this picture of an "actress" wearing a big gun and he didn't want his Paw to find out. *Playboy* magazine was such a big deal in those days. 1959. Geez, practically every kid in America at some point in their young life found a *Playboy*, ripped out the centerfold, and hid it for further consideration. It was the only place to see a naked girl.

Lately, I have been having fun watching whole seasons of *Gunsmoke*, *Have Gun Will Travel*, *Wanted Dead or Alive*, and other shows from those days on DVD. Every early *Gunsmoke* episode starts with Matt Dillon on Boot Hill doing a *Dragnet* sort of intro: "This is the city: Dodge City, Kansas. My name is Matt Dillon. I wear a badge . . . " to give a radio intro into that evening's episode. In the very first show Matt loses a fast-draw shoot-out in the street just like in Kurtzman's strip. The truth is that pulp magazines had pretty much died out by the mid-Fifties and all the writers went into television. Thirty-minute radio shows and half-hour TV episodes are basically pulp magazine short stories.

CRUMB: Yeah. Well, you have a bigger appetite for that stuff than I do. Back then, though, we all watched them. The whole family would passively sit and stare at whatever happened to be on "primetime"—you know, after dinner.

POPLASKI: Well, you obviously never saw *The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit* with Gregory Peck, or *Executive Suite*, starring I think, Fredric March, two movies that promoted the integrity of CEO management of the Fifties.

C'mon, Robert, according to those films any businessman in those days was a man of vision, guts, style—a suave individual, with impeccable tastes. They seemed noble because they wanted to deliver the goods to the masses with big American Dreams. I get a kick out of reading Kurtzman taking the stuffing out of big business, because, in truth, there was and still is a hardball mentality to make as much money as possible by hook or by crook and then have a PR firm polish up their image and make them look nice. I thought it was funny that the lead character is named "Goodman." And doesn't Robert Roark, the Burt Lancaster character editor of *Men's Sweat*, have the same name as the uncompromising lead character of *The Fountainhead*? Is that a poke at Ayn Rand? Whadda ya think?

CRUMB: Aww, I don't know. For me, it just doesn't have the edge to it that Kurtzman's earlier stuff has. My take on it is that Harvey was just caught in the bourgeois trap, with large mortgage payments, etc. He was full of anxiety about making money and wasn't really free to pursue his finest artistic impulses. He was mired in the commercial imperatives of the period, which were pretty awful—crass, claustrophobic, banal. Not that the situation has improved a whole lot since then—at least as far as satire goes. The bosses, the big men, they just don't like satire. It makes them nervous, they think it might lead to social break-down, as it is almost always a jab at the establishment of which they are staunch members and, you know, gatekeepers. I hate those bastards! I hate them for what they did to my hero, Harvey Kurtzman. He is a tragic hero in my book.

POPLASKI: Well, *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book* is what it is, and I love it. I like the way Harvey introduced each story that sort of lays it on the line and states what the point is before you get into the story itself, and then that *Vogue* magazine–style use of white space

opposite the splash page with more text to set the stage. Nice! I agree that "Decadence Degenerated" is funny and wonderful. I always wondered if the name "Rottenville" grew out of Dashiell Hammett's "Poisonville" in *Red Harvest*. I'm guessing that the reporter's name, "Etaoin Shrdlu," was the inspiration for your character in *Weirdo* N° 1.

One of the jokes for me was that somewhere I read that Tennessee Williams wrote his plays with male voices in mind and then afterward changed some of the male characters into women's roles. This led to the creation of what was called "strong" women characters in his plays that usually turned out to be crazy, like Blanche DuBois in *A Streetcar Named Desire*. In his hilarious story, Kurtzman makes the killer out to be Sister Sam, and a gag on the "strong woman" character role of so many dramas appearing in those days on *Playhouse 90*, *The Hallmark Hall of Fame*, and the like. Funny.

CRUMB: Yeah, Kurtzman was great with the Southern accents of his characters in that story. "Dayum houn' dawg! Allus underfoot!" And the sheriff kicks the dog. That cracks me up every time. The whole book is worth that one moment.



—A NOTE ON THE REPRODUCTION—

This edition of ***Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*** was reproduced from Denis Kitchen's original **Kitchen Sink Press** film, which was restored by **Dark Horse Comics** in 2014. The majority of that film was created in 1986 directly from the original art with a handful of "lost" pages that were filled in with stats or archival material from the Kurtzman estate.

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COLLECTION DESIGNED & EDITED BY **JOHN LIND**

IT'S A JUNGLE OUT THERE! BY **DENIS KITCHEN**

INTRODUCTION BY **GILBERT SHELTON**

EPILOGUE BY **PETER POPLASKI** AND **R. CRUMB**

1986 INTRODUCTION BY **ART SPIEGELMAN**

EXCERPTS FROM A KURTZMAN INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY DAVE SCHREINER IN 1986.

DARK HORSE EDITORIAL BY **PHILIP R. SIMON**

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FILM SCANNING BY **CHRIS HORN**

PUBLISHED BY **MIKE RICHARDSON**

KITCHEN AND LIND WOULD LIKE TO THANK: E. B. BOATNER, TONY BOURDAIN, ROBERT CRUMB, BILL KARTALOPOULOS, STACEY KITCHEN, ELLEN LIND, PETE POPLASKI, JOEL ROSE, GILBERT SHELTON, BERNARD SHIR-CLIFF, and ART SPIEGELMAN.

MIKE, PHILIP, CARY, ROXY, DAVEY, ANNIE, DARLENE, CHRIS, JEREMY & AUB, MATT P., MICHAEL M., AND ALL OUR FRIENDS AND COLLEAGUES AT DARK HORSE COMICS.

AND A SPECIAL THANKS TO MEMBERS OF THE KURTZMAN FAMILY: ADELE, NELLIE, AND MEREDITH.

FIRST PRINTING: DECEMBER 2014

DIGITAL ISBN 978-1-63008-150-8

PUBLISHED BY DARK HORSE COMICS &
KITCHEN SINK BOOKS, AN IMPRINT OF DARK HORSE COMICS, INC.
10956 SE MAIN STREET
MILWAUKIE, OREGON 97222

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Harvey Kurtzman

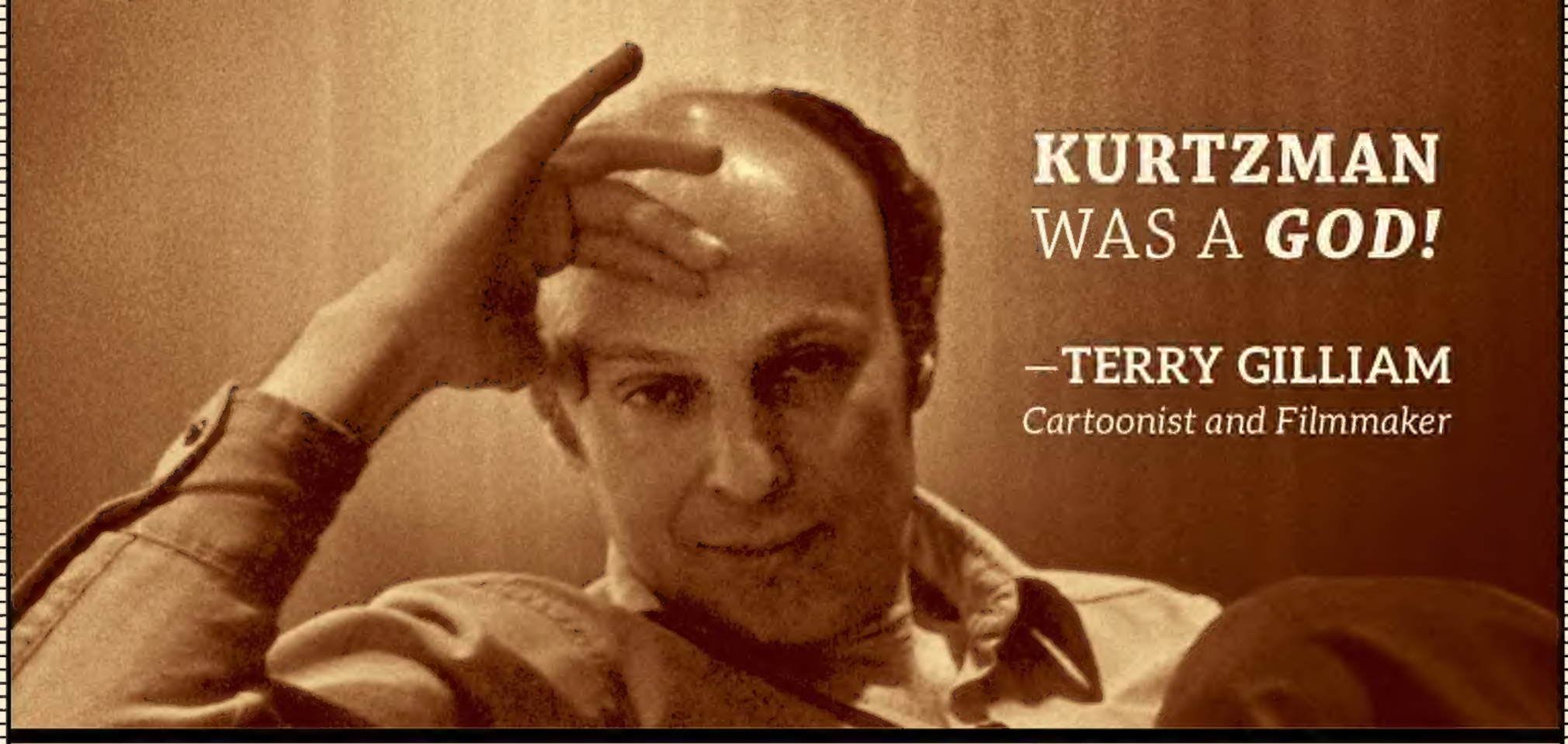
HARVEY KURTZMAN (1924–1993) was a writer, an artist, and an editor whose work had an enormous influence on several generations of cartoonists and readers.

Kurtzman created the hugely successful *MAD* in 1952. He later created *TRUMP*, a short-lived satire magazine for *Playboy* publisher Hugh Hefner, which was followed by the equally short-lived *Humbug*.

In 1959, Kurtzman created *Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*, one of the earliest graphic novels. His final magazine, *Help!*, was where his character Goodman Beaver took shape, and it would also give the first national exposure to cartoonists R. Crumb, Gilbert Shelton, Terry Gilliam, and Jay Lynch. Kurtzman finished his fascinating career alongside longtime collaborator Will Elder crafting "Little Annie Fanny," which ran in *Playboy* from 1962 until 1988.

The Harvey Awards, named in honor of Kurtzman, were established in 1988 to recognize the achievements of professionals in the comic book industry. In 2008, *The Art of Harvey Kurtzman: The MAD Genius of Comics* (Abrams ComicArts) was the winner of both an Eisner Award and (appropriately) a Harvey Award.

In 2014, Kitchen Sink Books and Dark Horse Books began assembling the Essential Kurtzman library, an ambitious series devoted to returning the works of the "*MAD* genius" to print in deluxe, definitive editions augmented by introductions, essays, and ephemera from the Kurtzman Archives.



HARVEY KURTZMAN, like **Charlie Parker** or **Jimi Hendrix** or **William S. Burroughs**, changed the whole landscape of his craft.

As a stylist, as an illustrator, as an innovator of layout, as a storyteller, he made everything that came *before* inadequate—and everything *after* transformative.

A towering, iconic figure whose work holds up as well today as it did the day he produced it.

—ANTHONY BOURDAIN
Kitchen Confidential, Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown

RANKED #26 ON **THE COMICS JOURNAL'S** "TOP 100 COMICS OF THE 20TH CENTURY!"

In 1958, **Harvey Kurtzman**, the creator of ***MAD***, approached visionary publisher **Ian Ballantine** with a radical new idea—a book containing four short stories told in an illustrated sequential format and aimed at an adult audience. In the decades that followed, this concept would come to be described by the term "graphic novel."

Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book, ahead of its time, proved an unusual commercial miss for Ballantine Books and financially disastrous for Kurtzman, but its inspiration and impact was tremendous—specifically on a key group of young underground cartoonists, including **R. Crumb**, **Gilbert Shelton**, **Terry Gilliam**, **Jay Lynch**, and **Art Spiegelman**, who would all seek out Kurtzman over the next decade.

This deluxe edition—the first volume in the **Essential Kurtzman** library—features an introduction by **Gilbert Shelton**, an essay by **Denis Kitchen**, a conversation between Kurtzman devotees **Peter Poplaski** and **R. Crumb**, and **Art Spiegelman**'s original introduction from 1986.

A long-out-of-print masterpiece for fans old and new, this is the definitive version of ***Harvey Kurtzman's Jungle Book*** for your shelf!

GRAPHIC NOVELS / HUMOR

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KITCHEN SINK BOOKS

ESSENTIAL KURTZMAN
VOLUME ONE